LITERATURE OF THE WORLD

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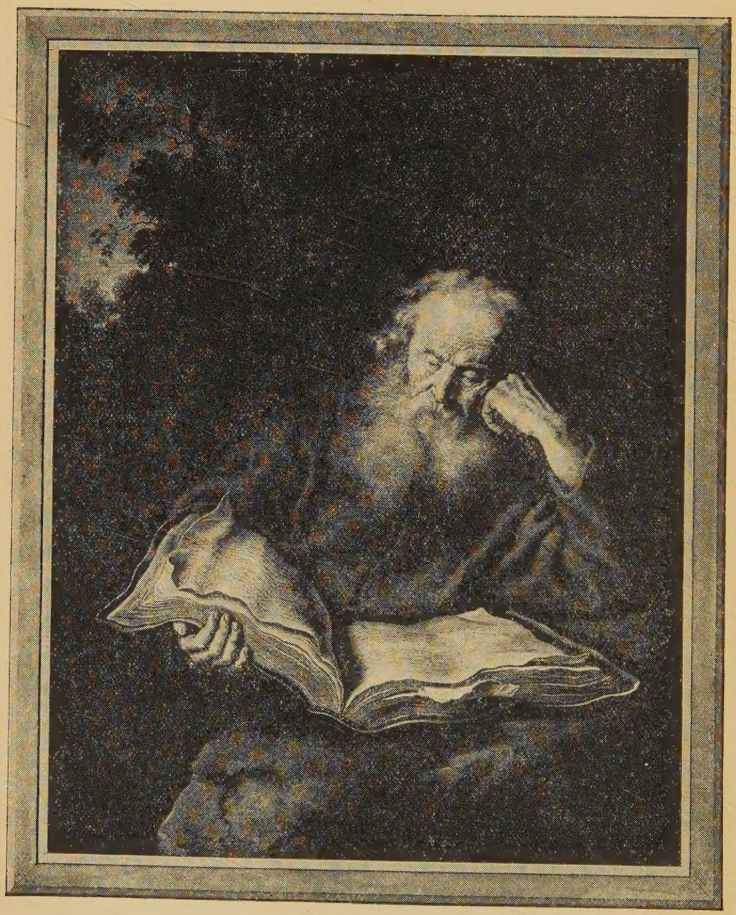

HERMIT READING

From the painting by Solomon Koninck

LITERATURE OF THE WORLD

AN INTRODUCTORY STUDY

BY

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AND

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PREFACE

This volume attempts to give a general survey of literature. It is in a sense the outcome of work done continuously for over twenty years in classes in literature at Hull-House, at Lewis Institute, and elsewhere in Chicago.

It has not been our purpose to furnish an inclusive and detailed compendium of literature nor to enter any of the numerous by-paths of literary criticism. Our aim has been rather to present in straightforward language a brief study of the literature of each of the major nations. We give in general the accepted judgments. We indicate the main currents, devote some attention to all writers of real consequence, and offer relatively full studies of authors who are recognized as the great figures in literature. In short, the book contains what we deem to be the essential facts that everyone should know about the literature of the world. Our observation has been that a person who may be well informed regarding the chief writers of England and America, for instance, has all too frequently only a vague impression of the literature of—let us say—Italy and Spain, or of Russia and Scandinavia. He may specialize in one direction, but show astonishing ignorance of the field of letters as a whole. We hope, therefore, that this general outline of literature in one volume—the first of its kind, so far as we know—may serve a useful purpose.

Generally speaking, each chapter gives the historical background, some information about matters of language and racial connection, and an indication of the outstanding characteristics of the people. Then follows a chronological survey of the literature. Extracts from the works studied are occasionally included where these will serve to elucidate the text, but it is obvious that this element must be comparatively slight in a volume of such propor-

tions as this. At the close of each chapter is appended a reference list of easily obtainable works in history, literature, and criticism. Since the impulse of the book is to encourage the reader to investigate the literature itself, good editions and translations of the classics are cited. Topics for special study are suggested as well.

For the shortcomings of this book the authors must, of course, accept full responsibility. It is pleasant, however, to record in this place our appreciation of the helpful advice and criticism of a number of friends, especially the following: Dean Roy C. Flickinger and Professor William F. Bryan, of Northwestern University; Reverend P. F. O'Brien, Professor of Latin in the St. Paul Seminary; Miss Carolina Marcial Dorado, of Columbia University; Dr. Edwin H. Lewis and Mlle. Lea De Lagneau, of Lewis Institute, Chicago; Mlle. Bertha de C. Favard, of Hyde Park High School, Chicago; Dr. Philip S. Allen, of The University of Chicago; and Professor Frederick W. Roe, of the University of Wisconsin. In particular we are indebted to Brother Leo, Professor of Literature in St. Mary's College, Oakland, California, and to Mr. Walter Taylor Field for time most generously taken in reading the entire manuscript.

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W. L. R.
J. M. O.

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LITERATURE OF THE WORLD

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When the term "literature" is properly used it denotes writings or records that are of permanent value, that have human interest, and that have beauty of form.

Books, like plants and animals, must struggle for existence. Those that survive after perhaps hundreds of years have stood a supreme test, and back of them is the authority of generations. Such books are not often prosy or uninteresting. They are broad in their appeal, they touch us in a personal and intimate way, and they interpret to us the richest products of our civilization. We read them for their own sake, and when we go to them they do not turn us empty away.

Literature for Information and Understanding

He who knows literature dwells in a large and beautiful world that has no limit in time or space. In actual life he may be unacquainted with his nearest neighbor, but in the world of books every door is opened by a magic more wonderful than that of Aladdin. With the much-enduring Ulysses he sails the seas, with Dante he explores the depths and mounts to highest heaven, with Don Quixote he rights wrongs, with Sigurd the Volsung he dares the wall of flame. Huxley teaches him nature; Gibbon, history; Ruskin, art. He listens to the sweet songs of Sappho and David and François Villon and Shelley. If it is philosophy that he craves, there are Socrates, Aristotle, and Carlyle. Everyday matters, such

as the face of the sky, the greenness of the grass, and the prattle of little children, take on a new meaning. Through a thousand avenues he has knowledge of the great passions that sway the heart of man—of hate and despair and jealousy, of love and truth and beauty, of the problems of life and destiny. A single volume, like Browning's "The Ring and the Book," may give him rich and varied study, associated perhaps with the landscape of Italy, the forms of English poetry, the singular ways of justice, the blackness of evil, or the exquisite beauty of a woman's soul.

Literature frees us from provinciality. No nation seems foreign or unfriendly when it is once disclosed to us in its literature. It is not knowledge but ignorance that makes us prejudiced. We laugh with Sancho Panza or Sam Weller or Tom Sawyer alike. Lear and Prometheus, Jean Valjean and Anna Karenina—do they belong to one nation or one time? All racial barriers disappear when we hear the agonizing cry, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" Through literature we become citizens of the world.

Literature for Pleasure

But books are needful not only to push back horizons, to impart information, and to increase understanding; one of their chief offices is to give pleasure. There is no other such enthusiast as the book enthusiast: he is termed a bibliomaniac. He thinks of books as he would of friends and companions. His grandfather may not have been born before the gentle Elia finished his life, but Elia is an intimate friend who is closer than a brother. The Roman Horace and the Norwegian Björnson are his friends; so are George Borrow and Walt Whitman and Montaigne and Omar Khayyám and Robert Louis Stevenson. In the flesh Thomas Carlyle or Henrik Ibsen may have repulsed him, but in the spirit they reveal to him their profoundest secrets. Edmund Gosse speaks in one of his essays of the inaccessibility of the English poetess Christina Rossetti even in a London drawing-room, but her deepest self is disclosed to us in this exquisite stanza:

"My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a watered shoot;
My heart is like an apple-tree
Whose boughs are bent with thick-set fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these
Because my love is come to me."

As the years pass, the friends of the reader of literature form a great company: the nonne, the prioresse, is there, and Eugénie Grandet, and Andromache, and Beatrix Esmond; there are Joseph the dreamer, and Olaf Trygvesson, and Hamlet the Dane, and my Uncle Toby, and Mr. Worldly Wiseman, and Dr. Johnson and Bozzy—and a host of others.

Wordsworth was right, then, when he spoke of books as "a substantial world":

"Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
Our pastime and our happiness will grow."

Literature for Inspiration

In the picture gallery, so the story goes, a woman was looking at some views of Turner's. "I am sure *I* don't see such things in nature," she complained to the man at her side, who proved to be the artist himself. "Ah, yes, madam," he replied, "but don't you wish to heaven you could?"

Literature makes us see more and further. Inspiration is its finest gift. "Books of power"—that is the expressive phrase attached to the world's choicest masterpieces. Great literature is animated by a great purpose. It is universal in quality: its roots go down deep, its branches spread wide. Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe (to mention no others), form a glorious company, and association with them will leave its impress upon us. "It is not possible," said Longinus, the Greek critic, "that men who live their lives with mean and servile aims and ideas should produce what is admirable and worthy of immortality."

In the succeeding pages of this volume we are to explore the pleasant land of books, where countless pilgrims have gone before. Our guideposts are, after all, only guideposts. Those who enter the land will do well to linger on the way and to investigate for themselves its beauty, not overlooking the many trails and paths and winding roads that lead from the great highway.

Reference List

Crawshaw. The Interpretation of Literature. The Macmillan Company.
Hudson. An Introduction to the Study of Literature. Harrap and Company, London.
Quiller-Couch. On the Art of Reading. The University Press, Cambridge, England.
Burroughs. Literary Values. The Houghton Mifflin Company.
Bates. Talks on the Study of Literature. The Houghton Mifflin Company.
Harrison. The Choice of Books. The Macmillan Company.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE OF THE ORIENT

The East conveys to our minds an impression of great antiquity. It is a region of vanished civilizations, and it carries with it an air of mystery and unreality. There is a remoteness also in its literature; the reader of English finds that only a portion of the vast literary stores of the Orient is open to him and that even that portion generally reveals modes of life and thought that can scarcely be recovered in our day. However, a glimpse of these Eastern peoples and of their literature will be informing. It will also furnish a useful background for the literature of Europe.[1]

Egyptian Literature

For hundreds of thousands of years, as it now seems clear, man has lived on this earth, slowly becoming master of himself and of his surroundings, perfecting his weapons and domestic implements, evolving in time a system of agriculture, and patiently domesticating animals as companions and beasts of burden. By comparison the Egyptians and Babylonians, who have passed on to us the earliest written records, appear modern, their history being almost of our own day. At least five thousand years before Christ true and relatively advanced civilizations existed in the favored regions of the Nile and of Mesopotamia. The first king of united Egypt reigned approximately 3400 B.C. (by some authorities he is placed a thousand years earlier). After an interval of five hundred years

[1] The literature of the Orient (apart from Hebrew literature, which calls for a separate treatment) does not bulk as large in our Western consciousness as the literature of a single country of Europe. It would be manifestly a mistake, therefore, to devote more than this one chapter to the study. The bibliography (page 32) may assist the reader in pursuing his studies in this interesting field.

the Great Pyramid of Gizeh was erected, and for another two thousand years the ancient Egyptians made their contributions to art, science, literature, and religion.

These ancient Egyptians, a dark-haired and slender people of uncertain racial connections, spoke a language allied to the Semitic and for a long period lived a life somewhat separated from that of their neighbors, developing a civilization highly individual and complex. They were not warlike, nor were they as a whole keenly intellectual; yet their contributions to life and thought were really extraordinary. To establish this fact we need but to recall their pioneer achievements in art, science, and religion. Their moral ideas and their conceptions of life after death deeply influenced other peoples.

Picture-writing, which we term hieroglyphics, was employed by the Egyptians very early, and also an abridged and more flowing form known as hieratic. A still further development, known as demotic, was the more popular type of writing employed later, largely for business purposes. After the second century of our era the Egyptian language came to be written in Greek letters, with the addition of eight signs taken over from demotic.

The literature of Egypt is very considerable in extent and embraces inscriptions, religious charms and extensive religious writings, hymns and lyrics, historical and legal material, proverbs and moral maxims, and many simple tales. We find this literature preserved on mummy cases and on the walls of tombs, passages, and chambers, but mostly on papyrus,—that is, strips of the papyrus reed skillfully put together,—wonderfully preserved in the dry climate of Egypt these many centuries.

The so-called Pyramid Texts, first discovered in 1880 in galleries and chambers in the pyramids, are probably the oldest written records that have come down to us of man's long intellectual history. Their hieroglyphic characters date from the twenty-seventh century B.C. and later. But they embody material belonging to a much earlier time, and taken as a whole they probably represent a period of a thousand years, closing about 2600 B.C. These texts, consisting of charms, hymns, myths, prayers, and ritualistic ma-

PAGE FROM EGYPTIAN BOOK OF THE DEAD (EIGHTEENTH DYNASTY)

terial, were designed to insure the happiness of the king in the hereafter, and they were intended for his exclusive use and benefit. Yet they cover a wide range, and they give many glimpses of life and thought in that bygone age.

Of great interest in the religious literature of Egypt is the Book of the Dead, portions of which, in the nature of religious formulas for the well-being of the dead in the future world, may date from a period three to four thousand years before Christ. Hundreds of copies have been preserved, some quite fragmentary and others on papyrus over one hundred feet in length. The Book of the Dead consists in all of one hundred and sixty-five chapters or more, though no one copy contains all this material. It is a body of mortuary literature intended for the use of the soul after death and giving the magical texts to be repeated for its protection. Some copies have been beautifully decorated with figures and symbols. But the Egyptian writers were careless in transcribing, and their manuscripts are hopelessly corrupt, one copy of a document differing greatly from another. Furthermore, the literature of Egypt, however fascinating it may be in the picture it gives of the life of a gifted people of early times, is not commonly artistic. Its creators were not ordinarily interested in beauty of form or perfection of detail.

Egyptian poetry had no rime or rhythm, though it possessed a parallelism like that used later by Hebrews (see Chapter III). There exist historical poems; for example, an epic[1] describing a victory over the Hittites. The poetry includes also love songs. Most interesting are the hymns, particularly the one addressed to King Sesostris (or Usertesen) III, preserved in a papyrus now thousands of years old. Four stanzas of this hymn have been translated by F. L. Griffith. The following lines are taken from the beginning of the second stanza (as translated by Griffith):

"Twice jubilant are the gods: thou hast established their offerings.
Twice jubilant are thy children: thou hast made their boundaries.

[1] The epic as a form of literature will be discussed in the chapter on Greek literature.

Twice jubilant are thy forefathers: thou hast increased their portions.
Twice jubilant is Egypt in thy strong arm: thou hast guarded the ancient order."

Of the remaining literature the most attractive portion consists of tales, the originals of which must have come from the Egyptian story-tellers of antiquity. They date from the Middle Kingdom and the New Kingdom (roughly 3000 to 700 B. C.), and are sometimes realistic, sometimes imaginative with miraculous elements. We have a curious tale of a shipwrecked sailor, strongly suggestive of Sindbad; the story of the doomed prince whose violent death was prophesied at his birth; the story of two brothers, written very simply and presenting a picture of agricultural life; and a number of others.

The early literature of Egypt shows clearly that the Egyptian writers had developed a strong moral sense. They felt keenly for those who were afflicted unjustly. They frequently used the story as a form of social gospel, an aid in the crusade for social justice. The similar use of moral tales and parables by writers of the Old and New Testaments will at once recur to the mind of the reader.[1]

Babylonian and Assyrian Literature

The very ancient civilization in Mesopotamia, possibly antedating that of Egypt, has been partially made known to us through the work of oriental scholars and archæologists. The mastership of that region was for a long period in the hands of the non-Semitic Sumerians, but these peoples were gradually absorbed by the Semites. Sargon was the first of the Semitic leaders (about 2750 B.C.). The Babylonian-Assyrian-Chaldean empires that followed dominated Western Asia for many centuries, to be succeeded in turn by the Medo-Persian (Persian Empire founded 538 B.C.) and ultimately by the Græco-Roman civilization.

[1] Over one hundred pages of Egyptian literature are given in the Warner Library, a very fine exhibit of a varied and representative character. The Breasted and Maspero volumes mentioned in the bibliography are of great value.

A good deal is now known regarding the Sumerians and their culture. They dwelt in cities; they drained the marshes; they were skilled in the arts; they wrote in a simplified hieroglyphic—the cuneiform, or wedge-shaped, style of writing; they possessed a highly developed religion. Their civilization, their laws, their literature, and their religion were taken over by the Semitic peoples who succeeded them. We do not know as yet the full extent to which Babylonians and Hebrews were indebted to the culture of these non-Semitic peoples of little-understood racial origin, who seem to have passed out of history at least two thousand years before Christ.

The Babylonian-Assyrian literature has come down to us in clay tablets. During the long history of these warlike and progressive peoples clay was utilized for writing of every description. Some of the poetry that has been preserved goes back to a very remote period; the earliest petty rulers were producing written records as early as 3800 B. C.; a great variety of chronological tables, legal codes, historical inscriptions, and personal and business letters date from the comparatively well-known historic period. Here is a portion of a letter from a traveler in a far country written to the lady Kadasu, presumably of his family: "Why hath news of thee to me been delayed, and why have I not seen a single answer to all the letters I wrote thee? For I wrote unto thee thus: 'From the day that I start, send unto me whatever taketh place in my house.' Why, then, have I heard no news of thee?" The clay tablet employed for such a letter would be one inch thick, two to three inches wide, and three to four inches long. It would be inclosed carefully in an envelope of clay for preservation and privacy, after having been powdered with dry clay to prevent sticking.

In the great library of Assurbanipal (seventh century B.C.) at Nineveh have been discovered twenty-two thousand clay tablets, an orderly collection of the scientific, religious, and literary material of these Mesopotamian peoples. This ancient library included some of the oldest poetry that has come down to us from any source.

Of the prose literature of the Babylonian-Assyrians perhaps the most interesting is the Code of Hammurapi (about 2100 B.C.). It

embraced, no doubt, many legal regulations that were ancient even at that distant time. The Mosaic legislation promulgated about a thousand years later presents many curious parallels.

It is, however, the old poetry that proves of the greatest value in this body of literature. There are prayers, magic formulas, and

PORTION OF OLD BABYLONIAN STORY OF THE FLOOD, FROM ASSURBANIPAL'S LIBRARY AT NINEVEH

mythological narratives. One poem describes the beginnings of creation and gives accounts of male and female gods. Another poem, the hero of which is Marduk, the god of Babylon, tells of the creation of man, followed by that of animals. Another centers in the heroic fight between Marduk and the rebellious Tiamat, and in the creation of the heavenly bodies. There are cycles of stories dealing with the eagle, and another cycle dealing with the winds.

Most famous of all is the so-called "Gilgamesh Epic," a series of twelve tablets discovered in 1872. Each tablet describes a separate episode. Gilgamesh, the hero, is represented as delivering his country from the Elamites (this must have occurred before 2000 B.C.). He then slays the divine bull which is sent against him by the god Anu, the father of the goddess Ishtar, whose love had been rejected by Gilgamesh. Ishtar visits the underworld to seek some further means of overthrowing the hero. She enters seven gates in succession and is held a prisoner, but is subsequently released. In the latter part of the poem we learn the picturesque Babylonian version of the story of the flood as told to Gilgamesh by Hasisadra, the Babylonian Noah. The Babylonian legends of the flood and of the origin of the world make an interesting study in connection with the similar traditions of the Hebrews.

There is a rhythmical quality in the Babylonian poems, but no regular meter. As in the Hebrew poetry of later times, parallelism is employed.[1]

Chinese and Japanese Literature

In the Mongolian centers civilization developed very early. Astonishing progress was made in invention, science, art, and literature—and then was strangely checked. The conservatism of the Chinese is a marked characteristic, continuing to our day. During most of its history China has seemed like a second human race, living apart from the rest of mankind. Its literature, though undeniably important in itself since it has deeply impressed for a great period of time the life and thought of countless human beings, has had little influence upon other peoples. The same is true of the literature of Japan. Our purpose, therefore, is to devote only passing attention to the writings of these two countries.

As long ago as nineteen hundred years a catalogue of standard Chinese literature was made, including more than six hundred authors. In 1782 there was published a catalogue of the Imperial

[1] Professor Toy's article in the Warner Library and the accompanying extracts from the Babylonian and Assyrian literature should be consulted by the reader.

Library in Peking, comprising seventy-five thousand volumes. Such facts will give a suggestion of the great extent of Chinese writings. These writings comprise poetry, history, biography, philosophy, science, fiction, the drama—and still the list is not complete. The central figure in the history of China is Confucius (sixth century B.C.). All Chinese literature is based on the Five Classics, works compiled in large part by Confucius, and the Four Books, in which are included his teachings. The former comprise "The Book of Changes," a very ancient work in sixty-four chapters, consisting largely of divination; "The Book of History," which contains legendary history carried forward to the twelfth century B.C.; "The Book of Odes," three hundred primitive poems and ballads collected by Confucius; "The Book of Rites," that overwhelming body of ceremonials and rules of behavior that have governed the life of the Chinese through the ages; and the "Spring and Autumn," which is a work of history concerned with the state of Lu, the birthplace of Confucius. In the Four Books the doctrines of Confucianism are set forth in the great teacher's own words. These textbooks comprise (1) the analects, or conversations of Confucius, (2) a treatise on self-culture, (3) a work in thirty-three chapters setting forth the doctrine of the "golden medium," and (4) seven books on Confucianism by his great disciple Mencius.

Poetry has enjoyed the greatest popularity in China, and the names of Chinese poets are legion, stretching over a period of over two thousand years. The short lyric is the common form; in China the epic has never flourished. An anthology made in 1707 covered some fifty thousand poems. Recently there have appeared several volumes of English renderings of Chinese poems.[1] Graceful nature studies, personal confessions, and brief moralizings are the common themes. A number of these poems seem to touch our own thought with startling closeness. Interest has also been taken of late years in Chinese short stories and plays. We may expect to find that an increasing amount of the literature of China will be made available in English as a logical result of the closer contact of the West with this ancient race.

[1] The collection undertaken by Mr. Witter Bynner is of special interest.

In Japan the influence of China became powerful during the period subsequent to the sixth and seventh centuries of our era. Before that time a body of old Japanese literature had been produced, largely of a religious character; but now China furnished the standard for the literary work and thought of the island empire. An important original product should, however, be mentioned—the native poetry of Japan. While this poetry has not, as a whole, been as important or as influential as the poetry of China, the so-called Nō plays of Japan have attracted much attention, especially of late, and several English translations have appeared. These dramas date mostly from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. They are written in prose and poetry, but the poetical element is the larger and more significant. They are short; the actors vary usually from three to six in number; the story is slight and is subordinated to the characteristic mystical element and to the moral teaching involved. The old spirit of Japan is enshrined in these plays.

Modern Japan has been deeply influenced by Western civilization. Its literature exhibits the stages of the conflict between old and new ideas. No writers of the first importance seem to have appeared during the modern period, but the output of Japanese presses and the general intellectual acuteness of the people of the empire are certainly most impressive. The most numerous publications at the present time are works of fiction, works on general literature and art, and writings in the fields of the social sciences.

Literature of India

India, like Persia, is of interest to us as an early center of the Aryan or Indo-European civilization. The Aryans pushed their way into India about two thousand years before Christ. The study of their ancient records has proved a fascinating branch of oriental research. It involves the beginnings of the Aryan speech; it discloses a wealth of literary material; most of all, it affords a glimpse of the early Aryan peoples, their ideas and their manner of life. In the Vedic hymns they sing of the glory of their gods and of the greatness of their own "Aryan" (or "noble") race. They are seen

marching in communities with the father of the family as leader and priest, and later, in their early settled home on the banks of the Indus, divided into tribes. Their civilization is relatively high; their chief wealth lies in their cattle; they use the horse as a beast of burden and as an aid in their battles; they eat beef and use fermented liquors; they sow seed in the field and they build boats for use on the river; blacksmiths, barbers, and other artisans are familiar figures among them. In short, our picture of these remote forefathers of the Aryan folk is interesting and fairly complete.

The literature of India may be divided into three periods: the Vedic, chiefly from 1500 to 1000 B.C., but persisting several centuries longer; the period of sectarian literature, dating from the time of Buddha (sixth century B.C.) and later; and the Sanskrit, which overlapped the Vedic period and extended to a period some centuries after Christ. Indian literature had a comparatively unbroken development for three thousand years. In bulk it is enormous, exceeding that of Greece and Rome combined. It is also original in form and especially important in the fields of religion and philosophy. It embodies the ritual and the doctrine of a national religion, Brahmanism, and of a world religion, Buddhism. Until a few centuries after Buddha's day the literature of India was not reduced to writing; and even then it was not ordinarily read, but was memorized and thus passed on from generation to generation. The sheer effort of the mind involved in the task seems extraordinary to us. When writing was finally employed, the style was borrowed mostly from the northern Semitic or Phœnician type. Few manuscripts have been preserved antedating the fourteenth century of our era, for the reason that perishable material, mainly birch bark and palm leaves, was used for the writing. After the Mohammedan conquest (A.D. 1000) paper was employed.

The ancient languages of India were Vedic and Sanskrit, the one related somewhat closely to the other. Popular dialects were in common use very early, and from these have sprung the native vernaculars of our own day. The Buddhistic writings made use of the popular language of the people of Buddha's day, especially in Buddha's own province. This is known as Pali.

The Vedas. Turning now to the literature itself, we find that four very important collections of hymns, or Vedas, coming from the earliest creative period have been preserved to us. The chief of these is the Rig Veda, which consists of about one thousand hymns in fifteen different meters. The form is rhythmical, but the rhythm is usually confined to the last four syllables of each line. There are ten books in the Rig Veda; the authors were chiefly priests or families of priests. The hymns are addressed to heaven, to the dawn, to the sun, and even to the earth, but in most cases to the divinities, particularly to Fire (the fire of the altar, the fire of the lightning, the light of the sun), to Indra (the god of the storm and tempest), and to Soma (the personified god of the intoxicating drink used in sacrifices). For example, the god of fire is addressed: "No god indeed, no mortal is beyond the might of thee, the mighty one." And the storm gods: "I hear their whips, almost close by, when they crack them in their hands; they gain splendor on their way. . . . With such strength as yours, you have caused men to tremble, you have caused the mountains to tremble."[1] The sun and moon are praised. There are prayers for personal blessings, wedding and funeral hymns, a song of creation, and speculative and philosophical poems. The following extract from the Vedic hymn to dawn, as translated by Hopkins, is singularly beautiful:

"Aloft the lights of Dawn, gleaming for beauty, have risen splendid as waves of waters. . . . Thou revealest thy bosom, adorning thyself, O Dawn, and gleamest bright in thy greatness. . . . Thy ways are fair, thy paths upon the mountains. Thou goest in calm across the waters, self-shining one. O thou, whose paths are wide, thou lofty daughter of the sky, bring to us wealth and nourishment. Bring sustenance, O Dawn, who dost bring us good as thou willst. . . . At thy clear dawning the birds fly from their nests; and [from their homes come] men who seek for food."

The late Vedic hymn to starlit night belongs in the same class:

"Night comes, the shining goddess, who now looks out afar with many eyes and puts on all her beauties. . . . At thy appearing we go to

[1] Translations by Max Müller.

rest as birds fly home to the tree. To rest come the throngs of men; to rest, the beasts; to rest, the birds; and even the greedy eagles rest. Keep off from us the she-wolf and the wolf. Keep off the thief, O billowy Night, and be our savior now. O Night, as a conqueror brings a herd of cattle, so do I bring [as a sacrifice] this Hymn to thee."

Other Vedic literature consists of the Brahmanas, ritualistic works designed to explain the Vedic hymns; the Upanishads, philosophical material in prose and poetry based upon the Vedas; and the Sutras, manuals elucidating the religious rites of Brahmanism.

During the period which followed the Brahmanas two religious sects greatly influenced the literature of India: Buddhism and Jainism. The former was based upon the teachings of Buddha, was Eastern in its origin, and was entirely out of sympathy with Brahmanism; the latter, the Western sect, was more agreeable to the older faith. The Pali literature, dating from this sectarian period, includes sermons and other didactic material and histories. From the Buddhistic writings we take this picture of the death of Buddha (Professor Rhys Davids's translation):

"When Buddha was alone with his disciples, then the Blessed One addressed the brethren and said: 'It may be, brethren, that there may be doubt or misgiving in the mind of some brother as to the Buddha, the truth, the path or the way. Inquire, brethren, freely. Do not have to reproach yourselves afterwards with this thought: "Our Teacher was face to face with us, and we could not bring ourselves to inquire of the Blessed One when we were face to face with him."' And when he had thus spoken they sat silent. . . . And the venerable Ananda said, 'How wonderful a thing, Lord, and how marvellous! Verily, in this whole assembly there is not one brother who has doubt or misgiving as to Buddha, the truth, the path or the way.' Then Buddha said, 'It is out of the fullness of thy faith that thou hast spoken, Ananda. But I know it for certain.' . . . Then the Blessed One addressed the brethren, saying, 'Behold, brethren, I exhort you, saying, Transitory are all component things; toil without ceasing.' And these were the last words of Buddha."

The Sanskrit period. In contradistinction to the Vedic literature the writings of the Sanskrit period proper are largely secular, not religious. They include epics and Puranas (literature of a doc-

trinal character written in epic verse), also curious and characteristic fables, a considerable number of dramas (generally comedies with numerous ludicrous situations), and a body of lyric poetry celebrating love and the beautiful nature world of India. We must confine our attention in this place to two of the great epics.

The Mahabharata, an enormous epic of over two hundred thousand lines (eight times the length of the Iliad and the Odyssey combined), signifies by its title the "Great War" and celebrates the conflict of two races or rival groups of people who sought in ancient times for possession of the valley of the Ganges. The war was fought, it is interesting to note, on the site of the modern Delhi. The verse is heroic, and the story is graphic. However, the main story is broken by long digressions consisting of tales and philosophical discourses. It is probable that the Mahabharata was commenced three or four centuries before Christ but was not completed until after many generations had intervened. This great poem comes from western India.

The Ramayana, on the other hand, comes from eastern India. It is concerned with the wanderings of a national hero named Rama and is much more brief and more romantic than the Mahabharata. The poet Valmiki is reputed to be its author. It was probably written a few centuries later than its predecessor. The Ramayana includes national legends and descriptions of religious systems, and involves much symbolism and mystery.

In recent times India has earned an international reputation as a center of thought and literature. The ancient Indian classics have become familiar and their power is recognized; the philosophical systems of India have been generally exploited; and in India itself during the last few generations a veritable renaissance has taken place, especially in Bengal. In the field of literature no such interesting figure has arisen in India for many generations as Rabindranath Tagore. He was born in 1860, of a gifted family of Bengal. From his early youth he has written a great deal—of natural objects, of love, of philosophy, of the communion of the soul with the Infinite. His songs are sung in his own province and reproduced in other dialects of India. His various writings in prose, drama, and

verse, written in Bengali and translated by himself into English, have gained for him international prominence. In 1913 the Nobel prize for literature was presented to him. Very few writers of our own day have such deep culture, such rare gifts, and such powers of expression. The subtle charm of Tagore is found at its best in his "song offerings" entitled "Gitanjali." The English edition bears an eloquent introduction by W. B. Yeats. These songs remind us of the Belgian Maeterlinck and of the choicest poets of Ireland; all lovers of beauty must be deeply moved by them, for they belong to the high tide of the poetry of our generation.[1]

Persian Literature

It is natural to consider Persian literature in connection with that of India, for both had their beginnings in the Iranian region before these two branches of the Aryan people separated. As Professor Jackson says,[2] "The morning stars sang together when poetry was born in these distant lands, and poesy's youthful voice was first lifted in a sacred hymn of praise, alike in the region of the Indus and the Ganges and in the realm of the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf."

There are three distinct periods in Persian literature. The first is termed the Old Iranian, and this centers in the sacred writings of the prophet and teacher named Zarathushtra, or Zoroaster (seventh century B.C. or earlier); the second, termed Middle or Pahlavi, extends from the third to the ninth or tenth century of our era; the third, or the New, dates properly from the time of the Mohammedan conquest (A.D. 641). Old Persian is closely allied to Sanskrit; the same is true of Pahlavi and modern Persian, though changes have naturally taken place through the centuries.

[1] Others of Rabindranath Tagore's writings will also be of interest, such as "The Gardener" (early lyric poems of love and life), "The Crescent Moon" (a series of child poems), and a philosophical work entitled "Sādhanā: the Realization of Life." The last-named book is a straightforward, interesting account of the great religious scriptures of India, with many quotations.

[2] See the interesting chapter in "Lectures in Literature," published by the Columbia University Press.

The old Persian records include a number of cuneiform inscriptions. Most interesting of these is a series consisting of five historical tablets carved by order of Darius I on the side of the mountain at Behistun. The Avesta or Zend-Avesta is the most considerable literary monument of old Persia. It is the only portion preserved of a once very considerable literature. (The Roman Pliny tells us of two million verses composed by Zoroaster!) A series of hymns in verse is the most sacred portion of the Avesta. This bible of the Zoroastrian religion also contains many texts and prayers, legal and ritualistic matter, and the Old Iranian account of creation. Zoroaster tells of his communion with the god Ormazd and of heaven and the future, and like a true prophet he calls upon mankind to repent. The Avesta has been made accessible to Europeans largely within the last century; the history of its translation into European languages and of the critical work done in connection with it is of great interest.

During the Pahlavi period very little of consequence in the history of literature was produced. The writings included translations of the Avesta and commentaries on it, texts on religion, histories, and even romances.

The New period, on the other hand, contains a large body of attractive material, and this is what we commonly think of as Persian literature. First, we note the poet Firdausi (born A. D. 935), whose chief work was the epic "Shah Namah," or "Book of Kings"; it occupied him thirty-five years. The first edition of this epic appeared in 1010. It is designed to cover the history of Persia from the earliest mythical times, 3600 B.C., to the Mohammedan conquest. It is a vast work of sixty thousand couplets and is concerned mainly with the wars between the Iranians and the Turanians. There are some episodes of special attractiveness, such as that of Sohrab and Rustum used by Matthew Arnold in his poem of that title. The New period contains other epic poems, historical and romantic, and dramas, novels, short stories, legends, and fables, to say nothing of examples of other branches of literature. But the literature of this period is mainly in lyric verse. It has been said that "Persia is the land of lyric poetry, the home of the nightingale and

the rose." Persian poems do not cover a wide range of subjects and are somewhat artificial, but they show a great perfection in form and are euphonious to a degree. Love and wine are the themes commonly celebrated in Persian lyrics. There is a body of court poetry and of religious and didactic poetry as well.

Omar Khayyám. The wonderfully lyric verse of Persian poets has attracted Western readers for several generations, and many English translations have been made. Omar Khayyám (twelfth century) and Hafiz (fourteenth century) have found more English readers than any other Persian poets. The superb renderings by Edward Fitzgerald of the "Rubaiyat" of Omar Khayyám may be classed with the finest English translations of any foreign poetry. Omar was a poet-astronomer who lived in the city of Nishapur. Over twelve hundred quatrains (four-line stanzas) are credited to him. Omar Khayyám's subject matter consists of complaints against fate and the world's injustice, comments on the insincerity of the pious, love poems on separation and reunion, poems in praise of spring and flowers, satirical utterances deriding orthodox beliefs and praising wine and pleasure, and, finally, poems of devotion and contrition.[1] Fitzgerald's selections cover about one hundred quatrains, fully half of which are faithful and beautiful paraphrases of the original, and the remainder more or less close transcriptions of the thought of the Persian poet. Some of the most striking of Fitzgerald's versions are the following:

VII

"Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing."

XVI

"The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes—or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face,
Lighting a little hour or two—is gone."

[1] Summarized from Winfield's analysis.

XXI

"Ah, my Belovéd, fill the Cup that clears
TO–DAY of past Regrets and future Fears:
To-morrow!—Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n thousand Years."

XXVII

"Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument
About it and about: but evermore
Came out by the same door where in I went.

XXVIII

"With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,
And with mine own hand wrought to make it grow;
And this was all the Harvest that I reap'd—
'I came like Water, and like Wind I go.'"

XLVI

"And fear not lest Existence closing your
Account, and mine, should know the like no more;
The Eternal Sákí from that Bowl has pour'd
Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

XLVII

"When You and I behind the Veil are past,
Oh, but the long, long while the World shall last,
Which of our Coming and Departure heeds
As the Sea's self should heed a pebble-cast."

LXIV

"Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us pass'd the door of Darkness through,
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too."

LXVI

"I sent my Soul through the Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell:
And by and by my Soul return'd to me,
And answer'd 'I Myself am Heav'n and Hell.'"

LXVIII

"We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go
Round with the Sun-illumined Lantern held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

LXIX

"But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and Days;
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays."

C

"Yon rising Moon that looks for us again—
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;
How oft hereafter rising look for us
Through this same Garden—and for *one* in vain!

CI

"And when like her, oh Sákí, you shall pass
Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the Grass,
And in your joyous errand reach the spot
Where I made One—turn down an empty Glass!"

Hafiz, like Omar Khayyám, is remembered not alone for his work as a poet. He had a scientific mind. He lectured on theology and philosophy. Curious biographical data have been preserved—of his travels, his interview with Timur the Great, his infidelity to the orthodox Mohammedan faith, and other items. He died close to the end of the fourteenth century.

The poems of Hafiz are concerned sometimes with individuals, but they deal chiefly with wine, love, youth and beauty, the spring, and the rose and the nightingale. It is quite possible that a mystic or philosophic meaning may be hidden in even the most straightforward and transparent of these poems. The delight that Hafiz showed in nature, the entire naturalness of his poems, his clear style and unique expression, have won for him a host of admirers. He excels especially in his odes entitled "ghazals," poems from five to sixteen couplets in length. The riming-scheme is elaborate; the signature of the poet is commonly worked into the last verse; and in the arrangement of the ghazals an alphabetical plan is followed, based on the initial word of the successive poems.

The principal poetical work of Hafiz is the "Divan," a collection of about seven hundred separate poems, mostly ghazals. Richard Le Gallienne, Justin Huntley McCarthy, Walter Leaf, H. Bicknell, and Miss G. L. Bell, among others, have made translations of the poems in the "Divan." Miss Bell's translations may be especially commended. Apart from Fitzgerald's "Rubaiyat" they are perhaps the finest English poetical renderings of any Persian poet. The following is a portion of Miss Bell's translation of the ode engraved on Hafiz's tombstone:

"Pour down, O Lord! from the clouds of Thy guiding grace
The rain of a mercy that quickeneth on my grave,
Before, like dust that the wind bears from place to place,
I arise and flee beyond the knowledge of man.
When to my grave thou turnest thy blessed feet,
Wine and the lute shalt thou bring in thy hand to me,
Thy voice shall ring through the folds of my winding-sheet,
And I will arise and dance to thy minstrelsy.
Though I be old, clasp me one night to thy breast,
And I, when the dawn shall come to awaken me,
With the flash of youth on my cheek from thy bosom will rise.
Rise up! let mine eyes delight in thy stately grace!
Thou art the goal to which all men's endeavor has pressed,
And thou the idol of Hafiz's worship; thy face
From the world and life shall bid him come forth and arise!"

Arabic Literature

The literature of Arabia is rich and varied, comprising poetry, anecdote, the typical oriental tale or romance, history, philosophy, and religious treatise. Our pictures of the Orient are inevitably colored by the luxurious, fantastic, and racy tales of Arabia and the Moslem world. We hark back to the great days of Bagdad, Cairo, and Cordova; visions of the crowded bazaars, the mosques, Arab sheiks, veiled women, and Haroun al-Rashid beset us. and we breathe an air of mystery and enchantment.

A PAGE (CHAPTER FIRST) OF A MANUSCRIPT COPY OF THE KORAN, THE BIBLE OF THE MOSLEMS

The classic period of Arabic poetry was just before and during the time of Mohammed (seventh century). A fixed poetic form and content of a high order of merit became prevalent. The poets told of the Arab life—the stretches of desert, the oases, the camels and antelopes, the joys of the chase, the life of the tribe. The poems were passed from mouth to mouth and became the common possession of the Arabs. The succeeding period witnessed the development of city life and the characteristic Moslem culture in such centers as Bagdad and Cairo. Arab Spain produced an enormous amount of poetry, as an anthology of twenty thousand verses collected in the tenth century bears witness. Hakim, the patron of literature, collected in Cordova a library said to contain four hundred thousand volumes. As the Arab poetic

spirit died out other branches of literature flourished, more particularly anecdote and tale and a vast body of religious interpretation and commentary. Arabia was the home of the Koran, and the Koran dominated the whole Moslem world. We have such excellent translations as Sale's and Lane's, but whatever interest the Koran may have for us exists more in the field of religion than of literature.

The Arabian Nights. To the Western reader the strange, alluring, exotic life of the East is embodied for all time in the Arabian Nights. This famous collection of tales first became known to Europe through the French translation by Galland in the early eigtheenth century. Since that time the characters of the Nights—Haroun al-Rashid, Scheherazade, the calenders, Ali Baba, Sindbad, Aladdin, and a host of others—have given delight to all the world.

The date of the Nights is variously estimated, but may be placed with some certainty as late as the thirteenth or fourteenth century of our era. The many accurate pictures of the life of Cairo of that period seem to point to that city as the place of their final collection. But the tales themselves have their source in many countries and reach back many centuries. It has been pointed out that West Africa, Egypt, and Syria are represented in the tales; so is ancient India; the afrits and genii and many other references carry us to Persia; at least one of the stories seems to be indebted to the Odyssey of Homer, and another to the Hebrew book of Esther; while the pictures of Bagdad in the great epoch of Haroun al-Rashid remind us constantly of the Arabian Moslem capital in its heyday. Burton expresses it as his conviction that the framework is Persian, that the oldest tales go back to the eighth century, that the nucleus may be placed in the tenth century, and that the authorship of necessity is composite.

The medieval Arab, as Burton also makes clear, is shown quite frankly at his best and worst. There is a certain nobility clinging to him. The boy is respectful to his parents, a good comrade, a thorough student, a gentleman in his manners. The man is courageous, loyal to his sultan and his faith, hospitable to strangers, temperate, and self-reliant. He may be depended upon as a friend

and father and husband, and he is the soul of honor and chivalry. He is inherently reverent, resigned to the decrees of fate and of Allah, and he is instinctively kind to the poor and afflicted. He looks forward with confidence to the life beyond.

On the other hand, the Arab of the Nights shows many traits that are far from admirable. He frequently displays the barbarian. "He is a model mixture of childishness and astuteness, of simplicity and cunning, concealing levity of mind under solemnity of aspect." He is indolent, overbearing, intolerant, superstitious. He is fanatical by nature and hates every creed but Islam.

The tales are loosely strung together by a familiar device. There is a certain king of India, so the prologue tells, who, because of his wife's infidelity, determines to destroy all the women of his kingdom, marrying them one by one and destroying each on the morning succeeding her marriage. The women are in consternation, but are saved by the wit of the vizier's daughter, Scheherazade, who contrives to tell the king such fascinating tales that her expected execution is delayed for a thousand and one nights, until the king no longer cherishes any hate in his heart for womankind. Thus we have the tales of the Thousand and One Nights, compiled from various sources and very unequal in value, but presenting as a whole a wonderful kaleidoscopic picture of the life of the East.

It is not a finished work of literature, but in such translations as Payne's or Burton's it approximates literature, for under their skillful hands the frequent slovenliness of the original disappears. Lane's translation, though more familiar, is less readable. The editing of Burton's translation displays vast erudition; indeed, all of his contributions to the study of the East are important. The Western reader will, however, do well to avoid a complete literal translation of the Arabian Nights, both because of its bulk (sixteen volumes in the Burton edition) and because of its frequent coarseness, tiresome details, and repetition of incidents.

A comparison of a free and popular version, such as Jonathan Scott's, with the literal yet poetic translation of Burton's, is curiously interesting.

SINDBAD'S FIRST VOYAGE

Scott's version

"One day, whilst under sail, we were becalmed near a small island, but little elevated above the level of the water, and resembling a green meadow. The captain ordered his sails to be furled, and permitted such persons as were so inclined to land; of this number I was one. But while we were enjoying ourselves in eating and drinking, and recovering ourselves from the fatigue of the sea, the island on a sudden trembled, and shook us terribly. The trembling of the island was perceived on board the ship, and we were called upon to re-embark speedily, or we should all be lost; for what we took for an island proved to be the back of a sea monster."

Burton's version

"We came to an island as it were a garth of the gardens of Paradise. Here the captain cast anchor and making fast to the shore, put out the landing planks. So all on board landed and made furnaces and lighting fires therein, busied themselves in various ways, some cooking and some washing, whilst other some walked about the island for solace, and the crew fell to eating and drinking and playing and sporting. I was one of the walkers but, as we were thus engaged, behold the master who was standing on the gunwale cried out to us at the top of his voice, saying, 'Ho there! passengers, run for your lives and hasten back to the ship and leave your gear and save yourselves from destruction, Allah preserve you! For this island whereon ye stand is no true island, but a great fish stationary a-middlemost of the sea, whereon the sand hath settled and trees have sprung up of old time, so that it is become like unto an island; but, when ye lighted fires on it, it felt the heat and moved: and in a moment it will sink with you into the sea and ye will all be drowned, so leave your gear and seek your safety ere ye die.'"

The material of the Thousand and One Nights presents a great variety but falls readily under a few heads. There are histories,

some of them very long, romantic in character or with romantic episodes, but founded to some extent on known facts. There are many historical anecdotes, largely concerned with a certain line of caliphs. There are fairy tales or romantic stories—and these seem to be the characteristic part of the whole—with supernatural elements; and other tales told for the sake of the philosophy or erudition which they display; and, finally, there are beast fables. The verses which are strung through the stories are taken from the classical Arabic poetry and from favorites of later times; they are of unequal merit, some with beautiful imagery and others quite commonplace in sentiment.

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A STREET IN BAGDAD

From the opening words, "In the name of Allah, the compassionating, the compassionate! Praise be to Allah, the beneficent king, the creator of the universe, lord of the three worlds," it will be seen that these tales display the reverence and religiosity of the orthodox Moslem; and they throw an interesting light on the customs and beliefs of the Mohammedan world.

Let us call to mind the material of a characteristic Arabian Nights tale:

Prince Camaralzaman is a promising youth, the son of the king of an island realm. When he reaches fifteen years of age his father plans to retire in his favor, and he urges the youth to marry. The prince conceives that "infinite mischief" is caused by women, and is alarmed at

the thought of the hazard a man is obliged to run in selecting a wife. The discussion continues for two years, when the prince, still obdurate, is immured in a tower by his father.

A similar situation arises in China, where the emperor has a daughter as fair as the dawn, who rejects all her suitors one by one until her father in anger holds her captive in a single apartment of his palace.

In a wall in the prince's tower a fairy, Maimoune, makes her home. She discovers the prince and finds him the handsomest of Allah's creatures. An evil genie, Danhasch, in the course of his wanderings, observes Badur, the princess of China, and is ravished by her beauty. Maimoune and Danhasch meet by chance while they are flying in mid-air. Contending over the beauty of prince and princess, they resolve to compare them side by side, and the genie transports the princess as by a flash of lightning to the tower where the prince lies asleep. The prince awakes, falls desperately in love with Badur, exchanges rings with her, and falls asleep again. The princess is aroused. She in her turn is enamored of Camaralzaman and decides forthwith that if this is the suitor provided by her father she is finally of an agreeable mind. She sleeps and is returned by the genie to her palace in China.

In the morning the prince demands the hand of his princess in marriage, but no princess can be found, and in his sorrow he wastes away on a bed of sickness. Badur tells of her experiences and is looked upon as mad. Her father proclaims that anyone who will cure her is to marry her and become heir to the throne, but anyone who fails is to die. The task is difficult, and one hundred and fifty in turn lose their lives. Badur has a nurse, whose son Marzavan is a sort of foster brother of hers. He returns from a journey, learns the court news, and is secretly introduced to Badur's apartment, where he agrees to travel far and wide to locate Prince Camaralzaman.

Marzavan journeys for four months and then reaches a region where there is talk of the prince and of his unfortunate illness. Marzavan follows the clue, presents himself, and gives out that he can effect a cure. This he does marvelously, and he and Camaralzaman escape from the island kingdom and make their way to China. Here Camaralzaman introduces himself as a skilled astrologer and offers to restore Badur. All wonder at his youth and beauty and attempt to dissuade him, but in vain. He sends a note disclosing his identity and inclosing the princess's ring, and Badur rushing out to greet him falls into her lover's arms. There is great rejoicing and a magnificent wedding. The feasting continues for several months.

Time fails to tell of Camaralzaman and Badur's further adventures, their separation on the way to the prince's father's home, the loss of Badur's talisman, Camaralzaman's danger in the city of the idolators, his discovery of an underground treasure, the miraculous recovery of the talisman, the happy reunion, etc. It is a tale of pure romance, and about it hangs the glamor of the East.

We have all dwelt in this enchanted land and have been enthralled at some time or other by these wonderful tales. The very titles bring back vivid memories: "Story of the Three Calenders," "Voyages of Sindbad the Sailor," "History of Ganem, the Slave of Love," "Story of the Hunchback," "Story of Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp," "Story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," "Story of the Enchanted Horse." And we feel grateful to the sultan of the Indies who needed entertainment to cure him of his cruel designs, and to the lovely Scheherazade who told the tales.

"A thousand and one nights had passed away in these innocent amusements, which contributed so much towards removing the sultan's unhappy prejudice against the fidelity of women. His temper was softened. He was convinced of the merit and great wisdom of the sultaness Scheherazade. He remembered with what courage she had offered to be his wife, without fearing the death to which she knew she exposed herself, as so many sultanesses had suffered within her knowledge.

"These considerations, and the many other good qualities he knew her to possess, induced him at last to forgive her. 'I see, lovely Scheherazade,' said he, 'that you can never be at a loss for these little stories, which have so long diverted me. You have appeased my anger. I freely renounce the law I had imposed on myself. I restore your sex to my favourable opinion, and will have you to be regarded as the deliverer of the many damsels I had resolved to sacrifice to my unjust resentment.'

"The sultaness cast herself at his feet, and embraced them tenderly with all the marks of the most lively and perfect gratitude.

"The grand vizier was the first who learned this agreeable intelligence from the sultan's own mouth. It was instantly carried to the city, towns, and provinces; and gained the sultan, and the lovely Scheherazade his consort, universal applause, and the blessings of all the people of the extensive empire of the Indies."[1]

[1] Translation by Scott.

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HOPKINS. The Great Epic of India. Charles Scribner's Sons.
DUTT (Tr.). The Ramayana and the Mahabharata (Everyman's Library). E. P. Dutton & Company.
TAYLOR. Prophets, Poets, and Philosophers of the Ancient World. The Macmillan Company.
TAGORE. Several volumes. The Macmillan Company.
Several other works have been mentioned in the text of the chapter.

Suggested Topics

Egyptian literature and thought.
A geographical study of Asia.
The maxims of Confucius.
The migrations of the Indo-Europeans.

Religions of Asia—a comparative view.
The epics of India.
Rabindranath Tagore and his writings.
The Shah Namah of Persia.
Omar Khayyám and his philosophy of life.
The typical life and thought of the East.
Tales from the Arabian Nights.

CHAPTER III

THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE

The Hebrew people have made by far the greatest contribution to the literature of the East. It is the East that has developed the religious systems of the world, and here too the Hebrew contribution is preëminent—unmatched in purity of thought, in profound understanding of the problems of life, and in depth of spiritual insight. The poetic imagery and the sustained and pellucid narrative, to say nothing of the religious ideas, of the books of the Old and the New Testament make a universal appeal. It is not to be wondered at that a few centuries ago our ancestors were called "the people of a Book," or that in our more complex days the Bible continues to be the most widely distributed of books in our language, as in most languages. It has been used on occasion as a source of despotic dogma and as an authority on all matters of history and science, but more commonly as the determining rule of life for the guidance of men. Our own study of it, however, in this place will be based upon its value as a work of literature.

Contents. The Old Testament, as given in our English Bible, consists of thirty-nine books, comprising prophetical, or prophetical-historical, legal, and poetic writings dating from approximately 1000 to 100 B.C. The New Testament contains twenty-seven books, all written probably in the first one hundred and fifty years of our era, and presents the life and sayings of Jesus and the history and literature of the early Christian Church. These sixty-six books form a library produced by many authors widely separated in time and circumstances of life—practically all, however, of one race and with an underlying purpose in their writings that gives the entire work a marvelous unity and coherence.

Matters of history. The traditions of the Hebrew people carry them back to the patriarch Abraham, who, reputed to have come

from Mesopotamia, settled in Palestine at a very early period. His descendants, nomads like himself, dwelt in that land for some generations until, driven by famine, they entered Egypt and there remained for a few centuries, first as welcome visitors and then as slaves. Under the leadership of Moses, a striking national figure, they escaped from Egypt and, after many vicissitudes in the wilderness, reached the borders of their ancestral home, Palestine (the "Promised Land"). Here Moses died, leaving the leadership to Joshua, who entered the land and began the slow process of winning it over from the more highly civilized peoples (nearly all Semites, like the Hebrews) who dwelt there.

From this point forward we are on more certain historic ground. The close of a rude period of conquest and settlement came with the establishment of a monarchy. David, the second king, is on the whole a fine, heroic type of man, notable for his courage, his attractive personality, his abounding vitality, and his instinct for leadership. The height of his reign was approximately 1000 B.C. He unified the kingdom, subjugated the enemies within his borders, extended his territory from the edge of the desert at the south to the foothills of Mount Hermon at the north (one hundred and fifty miles), and was a prominent factor in creating a national spirit and advancing literature and religion. The despotism of his successor, however, led to the disruption of the kingdom. Israel at the north and Judah at the south presented thereafter a divided front to their greedy neighbors, and in the end (Israel 722 B.C. and Judah 586 B.C.) were taken into captivity by the Assyrians and Babylonians. The remnant that returned under the edict of Cyrus (538 B.C.) and thereafter were mainly people of Judah. By this time members of the Hebrew race had come to be known generally as Jews, and this is their designation to this day.

Jerusalem, the capital city, remained the center of thought and faith during the closing centuries of the Old Testament period. For six hundred years the chief spokesmen of the Jews were the prophets, whose double function it was to give a message to their times and to look forward to better days and the coming of a deliverer. Palestine was ruled successively by Babylonians, Persians,

and Greeks, and for some years before the birth of Christ was part of the Roman Empire.

The life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth have profoundly affected the thought of the world. His is the most impelling figure in all history. For thirty years he lived quietly in his Galilean home, sixty-five miles north of Jerusalem, following the trade of a carpenter, and then for two and a half years went about from place to place, proclaiming by precept and example a new program of righteousness, until his cruel execution as a common malefactor. About forty years later (A.D. 70) Titus destroyed Jerusalem. Thereafter the history of the Jews became merged more and more definitely with that of other nations.

Literature as related to history. Palestine is a little land, and the Hebrews were an isolated people, preserving the purity of their race and maintaining tenaciously their peculiar institutions. However, influences came to them constantly from the great world beyond and enriched their life and literature. To the southwest of Palestine was Egypt, sometimes friendly, sometimes hostile, always to be reckoned with politically and culturally. Nearer at hand was Philistia, where dwelt a non-Semitic and highly artistic and civilized people. To the north was Syria, with its capital Damascus,—a constant factor in Hebrew history and on occasion a menace to Hebrew national existence. Most important of all was Assyria, the great aggressive nation to the east, the seat of a civilization ancient even in Hebrew times. The early Semitic traditions of the creation and of the Flood the Hebrews possessed in common with the Mesopotamian peoples, and Babylonian legislation became the basis of that of Moses. Caravans from Assyria to Egypt crossed Palestine from northeast to southwest, and other well-traveled trade routes brought a constant procession of people of other lands. Spices and treasures of the Far East were also carried across the desert from the south. In times of war, soldiers marched and countermarched on the soil of Palestine. The people of Israel became involved, in spite of themselves, in age-long quarrels. It is not surprising, therefore, that they were deeply affected by the culture, ideas, and fortunes of their neighbors.

The primitive age of Hebrew literature covers roughly the five hundred years before David. It was a period of oral traditions, during which ideas were being formulated regarding the origin of the universe and the beginnings of human history, and traditions were being collected of the Hebrew people, their experiences in Egypt, and their exploits in the conquest of the land. On the legal side a great body of precepts, laws, tribal usage, and Semitic legislation was taking shape. Poetry was represented by the epics of the creation and the Flood, taken over from other Semitic sources but purified of their baser elements in a wonderful way; also by such fragments of popular song as the Song of the Well,

"Spring up, O well, sing ye unto it,"[1]

and by war songs, such as the magnificent, even if brutally barbaric, Song of Deborah in Judges v, and the Song of Moses in Exodus xv (for example, verses 6–8):

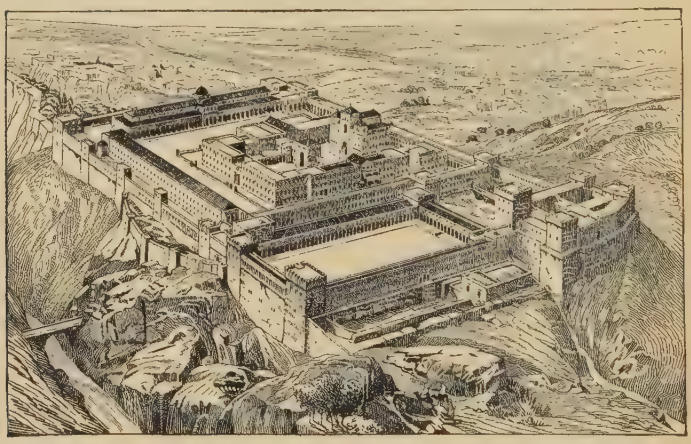
"Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power:
Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.
And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown those that rose up against thee:
Thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble.
And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together,
The floods stood upright as an heap,
And the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea."

Finally, there survive from this time popular fables and riddles in poetic form, such as the riddles of Samson (Judges xiv and xv) and Jotham's fable (Judges ix).

The next period (1050–750 B.C.) has been termed "the creative age of poetic composition and prophetic narration." The main body of the historical-prophetic material from Genesis to 2 Kings belongs to this period, including such hero and primitive stories as seem to be quoted from early writings now lost. Codes and other legal material in written form date from this time; also poetic extracts such as the popular proverbs given in 1 Samuel x and xxiv, the blessing of Jacob, and the Balaam oracles.

[1] Numbers xxi, 17.

Then came the great age of literary production in Palestine and in the lands of exile (750–400 B.C.), the period of the prophets—Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the Second Isaiah, and others. The codes in Deuteronomy and Ezekiel, the memoirs of Nehemiah, and a body of priestly material belong to this period. On the poetic side we have Lamentations and many of the Psalms.



THE LATER TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM AS ENLARGED AND BEAUTIFIED BY HEROD

A reconstruction by Schick

The closing three centuries of the Old Testament period were an age of retrospection and imitation. The last of the prophets belong to these centuries, the writers of the apocryphal (or non-canonical) books, the collectors of the prophetic and priestly narratives and of the psalter, and the writers of such books as Esther, Job, Proverbs, the Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes. The Old Testament canon was fixed, and a Greek translation of the Old Testament was made.

The order of appearance of the books of the New Testament need not especially concern us. It was not until the close of the second century that a definite collection of sacred books relating to the life and teachings of Jesus and to the history of the early

Church formed an authoritative canon, the New Testament as we have it—writings of the early apostles or followers of Jesus, and of those who wrote under their direction or influence. First in importance, though not first in appearance, are four biographies of Jesus, the Gospels. The remainder are letters or epistles to the churches or to individuals; one book of history; and finally the book of Revelation, closing the canon, mystical in its nature, with close relationship to several Old Testament writings.

Collections and versions. The Jewish canon of the Old Testament consisted of the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings—five books of the Law (the Pentateuch), eight books of the Prophets (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the Minor Prophets), and eleven Writings (all the remaining books). The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, but parts of Daniel and Ezra are in Aramaic, or northern Semitic, dialect. In the second century B.C. seventy Jewish scholars made in Alexandria a Greek version, the Septuagint. The quotations from the Old Testament found in the New are generally taken from this version, and the New Testament writings were all in the Greek language—Hellenistic Greek. The Old Testament section of the Latin version of the Bible,—the Vulgate,—completed by St. Jerome in A.D. 405, was taken from the Septuagint.

We are, however, naturally more interested in the English versions of the Bible. There have been ten chief versions, of which the most important are Wycliffe's, Tyndale's, the King James (or the Authorized), the Roman Catholic, the Revised, and the American Revised. The version bearing Wycliffe's name was completed (about 1388) a few years after his death; Tyndale's version dates from 1526 and later. The New Testament in the Roman Catholic Bible was published at Reims in 1582, "translated faithfully into English out of the authentical Latin, according to the best corrected copies of the same, diligently conferred with the Greek and other editions in various languages," etc. The Old Testament was issued at Douai in 1609–1610. Thoroughgoing revisions of the Reims and Douai Testaments appeared in 1749–1750 and again in 1763–

1764, and these are the versions used at the present day by English-speaking Roman Catholics.[1]

The Authorized Version was projected as early as 1604 and undertaken by about fifty divines, at King James's command. It was issued in 1611. The beauty and dignity of its style and the felicity of its phrases must be recognized by every reader. No other version can be compared with it, and, notwithstanding its occasional mistakes, it has not been superseded to any extent by later versions. It served in large measure to fix our English speech, and it is one of the chief glories of the Golden Age that produced it. The title-page stated that the text was "newly translated out of the original tongues, with the former translations diligently compared and revised." Parallel readings of the following familiar passage (Matthew vii, 24–27) will be instructive:

WYCLIFFE, 1389

"Therfore eche man that herith these my wordis, and doth hem, shal be maad liche to a wijse man, that hath bildid his hous vpon a stoon. And rayn came doun, and flodis camen, and wyndis blewen, and rusheden in to that hous; and it felle nat doun, for it was foundid on a stoon. And euery man that herith these my wordis, and doth hem nat, is liche to a man fool, that hath bildid his hous on grauel. And rayn came doun, and floodis camen, and wyndis blewen, and thei hurliden in to that hous; and it felle doun, and the fallyng doun therof was grete."

TYNDALE, 1526

"Whosoever hearethe off me these saynges, and doethe the same, I wyll liken hyme vnto a wyse man, which byllt his housse on a rocke: and aboundance off rayne descended, and the fluddes cam, and the wynddes blewe, and bett vppon that same housse; and it was not overthrowen, because it was grounded on the rocke. And whosoever heareth of me these sainges, and doth not the same, shalbe lykened vnto a folysh man, which bilt his housse apon the sonde. And abundaunce of rayne descended, and the fluddes cam, and the wynddes blewe, and beet vppon that housse; and it was overthrowen, and great was the fall off it."

KING JAMES, 1611

(*Original spelling*)

"Therefore, whosoeuer heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I wil liken him vnto a wise man, which built his house vpon a rocke: and the raine descended, and the floods came, and the windes blew, and beat vpon that house: and it fell not, for it was founded vpon a rocke. And euery one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall bee likened vnto a foolish man, which built his house vpon the sand: And the raine descended, and the floods came, and the windes blew, and beat vpon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

[1] By way of comparison with the Authorized Version the Twenty-third Psalm as given in the Douai Bible (revised) will be of interest:

"The Lord ruleth me: and I shall want nothing. He hath set me in a place of pasture. He hath brought me up, on the water of refreshment: he hath converted my soul. He hath led me on the paths of justice, for his own name's sake.

Of the Authorized Version, Father Faber has remarked: "It lives on the ear like a music that can never be forgotten. . . . It is part of the national mind and the anchor of national seriousness. The power of all the griefs and trials of man is hidden beneath its words."

Old-Testament Poetry

Hebrew is a primitive language. There is no involved syntax, no elaboration in the structure of the sentence. A simple "and" is a frequent initial word. The vocabulary is restricted. In the poetry the effect is produced by the natural rhythms, which, as Professor Rhys points out, "can be transferred without any loss into equivalent idioms, and its 'parallelism' can be repeated with almost the same haunting felicity and with more than a trace of its native magic, in other tongues."

Abundant examples show that the Hebrew mind was deeply impressed with the wonders and beauties of the created world. The Biblical writers looked upon nature as an expression of the power and love of God, and when nature thoughts find expression, the characteristic, indeed, the exclusive, note is religious.

"He made darkness pavilions round about him, dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies."—2 Samuel xxii

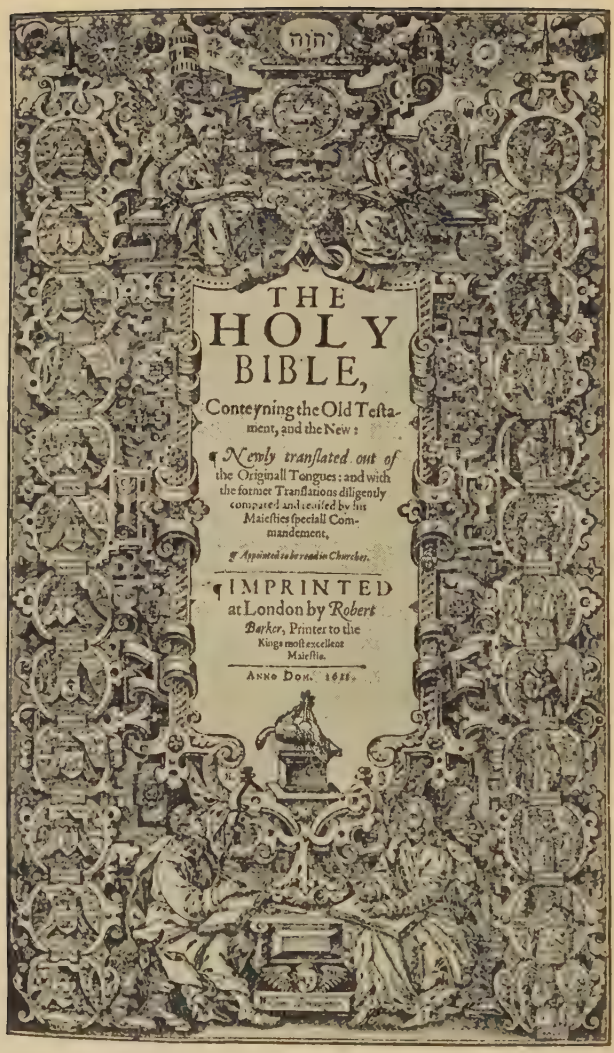
"He [the righteous man] shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."—Psalms i

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork."—Psalms xix

"He [the Lord] maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."—Psalms xxiii

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."—Psalms xlii

For though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will fear no evils, for thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they have comforted me. Thou hast prepared a table before me, against them that afflict me. Thou hast anointed my head with oil; and thy chalice which inebriateth me, how goodly is it! And thy mercy will follow me all the days of my life. And that I may dwell in the house of the Lord unto length of days."


יהוה
THE
HOLY
BIBLE,
Conteyning the Old Testament, and the New:
¶ Newly translated out of the Originall Tongues: and with the former Translations diligently compared and reuised by his Maiesties speciall Commandement,
Appointed to be read in Churches.
¶ IMPRINTED at London by Robert Barker, Printer to the Kings most excellent Maiestie.
Anno Dom. 1611.

TITLE-PAGE OF FIRST EDITION OF KING JAMES BIBLE

"Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

"Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof.

"Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

"They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side.

"The pastures are clothed with flocks: the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout with joy, they also sing."[1]—Psalms lxv

"The sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God."—Psalms lxxxiv

"As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

"For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone: and the place thereof shall know it no more."—Psalms ciii

"Thou art clothed with honor and majesty. Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain,

"Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind:

"Who maketh his angels spirits: his ministers a flaming fire:

"Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever.

"Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.

"At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. . . .

"He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills.

"They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst.

"By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches."—Psalms civ

[1] Cf. "The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands."—Isaiah lv

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters;

"These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.

"For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof.

"They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble.

"They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end.

"Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.

"He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

"Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven."—Psalms cvii

"He [God] is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?

"Which removeth the mountains, and they know not: which overturneth them in his anger.

"Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.

"Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the stars.

"Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea.

"Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south.

"Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.

"Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not: he passeth on also, but I perceive him not."—Job ix

Of such poetry as this—simple, searching, eloquent—who shall speak? Note that, apart from the rhythm and the sublimity of the ideas, the effect is produced by a parallelism of structure, a balancing of one line or phrase with another:

(1) "Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, (2) and in their death they were not divided."

(1) "They were swifter than eagles; (2) they were stronger than lions."

(1) "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; (2) the world, and they that dwell therein."

(1) "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? (2) the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

Sometimes the phrases are in antithesis:

(1) "Though your sins be as scarlet, (2) they shall be as white as snow;

(1) "Though they be red like crimson, (2) they shall be as wool."

Sometimes the first portion is incomplete and the second is both repetition and completion:

(1) "Give unto the Lord, O ye sons of the mighty, (2) give unto the Lord glory and strength."

Sometimes the parallelism consists in the putting and answering of a question:

(1) "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?

(2) "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully."

In a passage such as Psalm cxix the arrangement is artificial and less poetic: every verse contains a synonym of the word "law," and the entire poem is in the form of an acrostic of the Hebrew alphabet, each stanza containing eight couplets commencing with a single letter. Another poem equally conscious of form but far more beautiful in content is the book of Lamentations, a dirge acrostic the scheme of which is very elaborate and interesting (see Driver's "Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament" and Moulton's "Modern Reader's Bible").

Lyric poems of great beauty crowd upon us as we turn the leaves of the Hebrew poetic books. They express many human emotions, with, however, a notable absence of humor and other lightsome qualities. Sadness and longing:

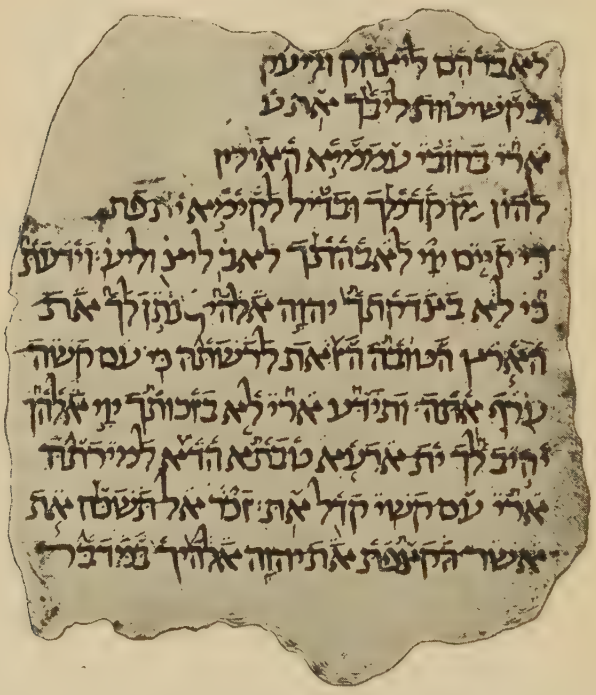
"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

"We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.

"For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying,

"Sing us one of the songs of Zion.

"How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"—Psalms cxxxvii



HEBREW MANUSCRIPT (DEUTERONOMY IX, 5 END)

"How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! how is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary!"—Lamentations i

Praise:

"Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing.

"Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture."

Psalms c

Awe and adoration:

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

"If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

"If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

"Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

"If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.

"Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.—Psalms cxxxix

Contrition:

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

"Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

"For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me."—Psalms li

Trust:

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

"I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust."—Psalms xci

Love:

"For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.

"For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust."

Psalms ciii

There is an exquisite love poem in the Bible that has fortunately been preserved to us—The Song of Songs—which seems foreign to

the general purpose and unity of the Old Testament. It consists of a cycle of songs celebrating a marriage. Here, as in other cases, a comparison with similar oriental literature shows the essential nobility and purity of the Hebrew conceptions.

"My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away.

"For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;

"The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land;

"The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away. . . .

"My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies.

"Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether."

The Song of Solomon ii, 10–17

Many other passages in this poem have equal beauty.

Out of the later, thoughtful, chastened, philosophic Old Testament period comes the Book of Job. "A noble Book," says Carlyle; "all men's Book! It is our first, oldest statement of the never-ending Problem,—man's destiny, and God's ways with him here in this earth. And all in such free flowing outlines; grand in its sincerity, in its simplicity; in its epic melody, and repose of reconcilement." It is a great world poem, one of the most magnificent poems in all literature. In the sense that it presents a single theme, a great theme, and a complete theme, it is an epic. The controversies between Job and his three friends suggest the analogy of the Platonic dialogue. A parallel may also be drawn with Æschylus's tragedy "Prometheus Bound." Professor Genung points this out and traces the struggle of Job upward to truth and light by means of "five acts or stages with their points of objective."

"Act I. To Job's blessing and curse, i–iii. (The stroke devised and executed; the silent friends; Job's access of bewilderment.)

"Act II. To Job's ultimatum of doubt, iv–x. (Wisdom misfit and insipid; the world-order a hardness and chaos; Job's plea for mutuality and mediation.)

"Act III. To Job's ultimatum of faith, xi–xix. (The friends' false attitude; Job's life resolve of integrity; conviction that his Redeemer —next of kin—liveth.)

"Act IV. To Job's verdict on things as they are, xx–xxxi. (No outward terms of profit and loss; yet wisdom still supreme; Job's life record ready for presentation.)

"Act V. To the vindicating dénouement, xxxii–xlii. (The self-constituted umpire fails; the whirlwind words display wisdom and power of creation; Job emerges to vindication and mediation.)"[1]

From Job's opening words, spoken in the access of his grief,

"Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived,

"Let that day be darkness; let not God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it,"

to his final submission to God,

"[I have] uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not,"

the book touches the heights and depths of life and the very innermost of human problems.

Our study of Old Testament poetry must close, but much has perforce been passed by—such as the fine Hebrew elegies or laments to be found in Lamentations, in Ezekiel xix, xxvii, and xxxii, and in Isaiah xiv; striking passages from the philosophic poetry of Proverbs; and the sadly beautiful pictures of Ecclesiastes, particularly the description of old age given in chapter xii.

Old-Testament Narratives

As we turn to the simple, noble, and searching prose narratives in the books of the Old Testament, our minds revert not only to the days when these stories first held us enthralled but to those far-distant days when by fireside or in market place or in Tent of Meeting or on hilltop in Palestine these tales were told and retold to those ancient peoples, listening thoughtfully and reverently to the traditional account of the beginning of days and of the check-

[1] From Genung's "Guidebook to the Biblical Literature."

ered experiences of the fathers of their race. Do they seem remote to us? Are we not moved even as they?

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

"Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred and from thy father's house unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great: and thou shalt be a blessing."

"And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering."

"And he [Jacob] lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set: and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it."

"God called unto him [Moses] out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

"So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands. . . . And they cried, The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon."

"And Ruth said [to Naomi], Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go: and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me and more also if ought but death part thee and me."

"And David sat between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone. . . . And he came apace, and drew near. . . . And the king said unto Cushi, Is the young man Absalom safe? And Cushi answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is. And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

"And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. . . . Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

Splendid examples of sustained narrative are to be found in all the historical books of the Old Testament, throughout the books of Ruth and Esther, and in the earlier chapters of Daniel. They constitute real literature, and of a noble type.

The Prophets

An acquaintance with the Hebrew prophets—their hatred of oppression, their love of holiness and justice, their enduring hope and faith—enriches us. How magnificent a thing to stand by the side of Amos the herdsman of Tekoa as he preached in the streets of Bethel:

"For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes. . . . Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel. For, lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, The Lord, The God of hosts, is his name."

How overpowering the message of love and forbearance and patience that came out of the pathetic domestic experience of Hosea! How ennobling the pronouncement of Micah:

"Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

FROM THE FRIEZE OF PROPHETS BY SARGENT

Most of all, how exalted the outlook of the great prophets of Israel! The troubles that they suffered were as nothing in the light of the glories of the latter day. "The work of righteousness," said Isaiah, "shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places." And again: "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem." Ezekiel, in the land of exile, prophesied:

"For I will take you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. . . . And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God." And that other, greater prophet of the Exile cried:

"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. The voice of him that crieth in the

FROM THE FRIEZE OF PROPHETS BY SARGENT

wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

The haunting beauty of such passages can scarcely be surpassed.

The later thought of the prophets centered in the person of a deliverer. "The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him," said Isaiah, "the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and

might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears . . . and righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." Our view of the Old Testament may fitly terminate with this picture, from the Second Isaiah, of the Suffering Servant who was to atone for the sins of the people:

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

Isaiah liii

The New Testament

There is much in the books of the New Testament that carries on, or fulfills, the thought of the Old. The writers told of the life and experiences of one who, as they firmly believed, was the Messiah foretold by the prophets. They were inheritors of the past, and the constant survival of Old Testament ideas in the New gives the two portions of the Bible a unity that every reader must appreciate.

When we consider literature as applied to the writings of the New Testament, the four Gospels stand forth preëminent. The Epistles, though they contain the striking passages on love and on immortality in 1 Corinthians, and other chapters scarcely less noteworthy (for example, Hebrews xii, James iii, 1 John iii), are not, speaking generally, to be compared with them. The imagery of the book of Revelation is sometimes very beautiful, as in the closing chapters:

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with

men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."

But let us turn our particular attention to the Gospels, as the finest examples of New Testament literature.

Note the unmatched felicity of expression in such passages as the following, taken almost at random:

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all peoples."

"Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. . . . Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

"Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I

love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto

CHRIST AND THE YOUNG RULER

From the painting by Hofmann

him, Feed my sheep. Verily, verily I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not."

Every reader of the Gospels has noted the unerring instinct of Jesus in dealing with all classes,—rich and poor, wise and ignorant, young and old,—reaching their hearts, solving their problems. He speaks, therefore, a universal language which we can all understand.

His use of the parable was unsurpassed, and when he tells of the sower, the prodigal son, or the good Samaritan, everything is in keeping, nothing is superfluous.

"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

The characteristic message of Jesus is one of love and sympathy. As he understood the heart of man, so he reached more certainly than any other man who ever lived the heart of the Infinite God.

To the man of today one of the most interesting things about Jesus is that he was essentially and radically democratic. His soul blazed with indignation at the sight of oppression and wrong. He was the true successor of the Old Testament prophets and must have noted with deep inward satisfaction such passages as "He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor"; "With righteousness shall [God] judge the world, and the people with equity"; "Woe unto them that . . . turn aside the needy from judgment, and take away the right from the poor of my people." To Jesus all men were equal in the sight of God. "I call you not servants," he said to his disciples, "for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends." Not only did the common people of Jesus' day hear him gladly but, in their turn, the early martyrs, the crofters of the Scottish Highlands, the Huguenots of France, the peasants of Germany, the Pilgrims of New England, took comfort and courage in his words. The striving people of all ages have received inspiration from the sayings of this greatest of democratic leaders.[1]

[1] In the foregoing chapter no mention has been made of the extra-Biblical literature of the Hebrews. Of this there is a considerable amount, and some portions reach a high level. We have deemed it advisable, however, to confine our study to the Bible.

Reference List

Read the Bible itself (Authorized Version preferably).

Genung. Guidebook to the Biblical Literature. Ginn and Company.

Driver. Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Kent. Various books on Biblical study. Send to Charles Scribner's Sons for list.

Moulton. Literary Study of the Bible. The Macmillan Company.

Gardiner. The Bible as Literature. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Moulton. Modern Reader's Bible. The Macmillan Company.

Rhys (Ed.). Lyrical Poetry from the Bible (2 vols.). E. P. Dutton & Company.

Suggested Topics

The relation of Palestine to other lands in Bible times.

Old Testament history.

New Testament history.

Old Testament poetry compared with English or American poetry.

Narratives of the Old Testament.

Great passages from Isaiah.

Ruth: a Biblical idyl.

The book of Job.

Jesus' use of the parable.

Ideas of Jesus on brotherhood and democracy.

Quotations from the Bible in current speech and literature.

CHAPTER IV

GREEK LITERATURE

It is but a commonplace to say that our debt to the Greeks is incalculable. Whether the Greek genius applied itself to architecture, sculpture, music, literature, government, logic, or speculative thought, the products excelled those of any other people of antiquity. We are separated from the Greeks by many centuries, but every intelligent person of today has a certain familiarity with Homer, Pericles, Phidias, Sophocles, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle —to mention no others of those who have contributed to the luster of this richly gifted race. Our own culture is based largely on the Greek, or on the Greek through the Latin. In the field of literature we have but to name Milton, Dryden, Shelley, Keats, Tennyson, and Swinburne to recall the copious use that our English poets have made of Greek conceptions and themes; and, indeed, what writer or thinker of the modern world does not hark back, consciously or unconsciously, to the Greek? At many points the Greek literature seems extremely modern. This is not surprising, for the Greeks were a highly civilized race, and in the long history of humanity they lived—to use Professor Robinson's picturesque phrase—but "day before yesterday." We feel our age closely akin to theirs in artistic impulse, keen power of analysis, thirst for knowledge, splendid originality, vigorous imagination, and fondness for beauty.

Early history. The earliest memorable event which is recorded in Greek literature was the capture (twelfth century B.C.) of Troy, a famous city on the northern coast of Asia Minor. A number of centuries before this (roughly, 2000 B.C.) a branch[1] of the Indo-European race—known to us as the Greeks, to themselves as the Hellenes—had migrated from the region of the Black Sea, had settled in the Greek peninsula, and had by degrees taken over

[1] The vanguard were the Achæans; other groups followed later.

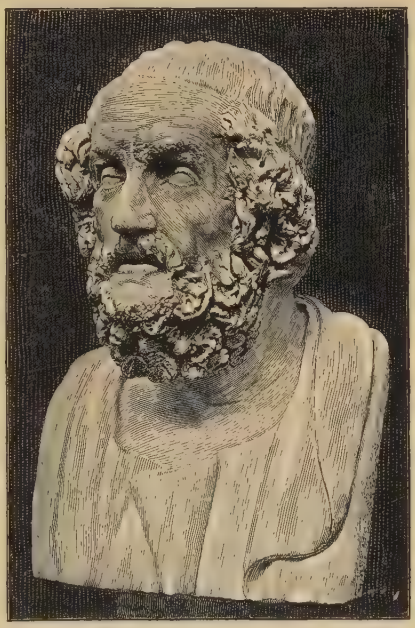
the relatively advanced Ægean civilization which they had found. Their predecessors were a white race of a higher stage of culture than their own, and the contact of the Greeks with them was important. The subsequent mastery of the neighboring island of Crete gave the Greeks still further artistic impressions and impulses. One additional step is to be recorded: the capture of Ægean settlements in the islands of the Ægean Sea and on the coast of Asia Minor. By 1000 B.C. the Greek peoples had subdued the entire Ægean world.

We feel strangely drawn to these earliest Europeans (using the word in the modern sense). They had definitely passed their nomad period, though still retaining many barbaric traits. They had looked upon the wonders of Mycenæ and Cnossus and had made them their own. They had mastered the Ægean Sea with their "swift ships." They had become acquainted with the civilization of Egypt to the south. They had bartered with those earliest of commercial travelers, the Phœnicians, and from them had secured the most valuable of their products, the alphabet. By the close of the period of migration this instrument of thought was recording the earliest Greek literature. Part of the Greek inheritance consisted of hero tales or sagas, folk stories, songs, legends—going back to the old pre-Dorian Achæans and to the Ægean peoples. The Greeks were a mixed race and spoke many dialects. They stood at the end of an age. Mount Olympus was still the home of their gods. They had a peculiar fondness for such heroic stories as the exploits of Perseus, the labors of Hercules, the feats of Theseus, the quarrels of the royal house of Thebes, the Argonautic expedition, the capture of Troy, the return of the heroes. And in their later and more sophisticated days they turned to such tales as to a great storehouse for literary material.

The Homeric Epics

The earliest Greek literature is epic in form. Epic poems were recited by bards and were transmitted from one generation to the next. Probably this type of poetry was very common by 900 B.C. The greatest of all epic poems, the Iliad and the Odyssey, drew

upon the subject matter of earlier poems and in turn were succeeded by a whole cycle of minor epics of varying value. The Greeks thought of the epic as poetry that was recited, not sung to music (as in the case of the lyric), and as narrative, not acted, poetry (as distinguished from dramatic). Aristotle's definition of the epic is more specific. He asserts that it must have a dignified theme, organic unity, and ordered progress. The events must form a connected series and move to a common end. We think of the epic as being also frequently national in character, narrating events which a people may deem most worthy of remembrance in its history.



HOMER

The Iliad and the Odyssey existed in practically their present form by the end of the ninth century B.C. They seem to have been lost sight of for a considerable period and then to have reappeared. Public recitations made Homeric poetry generally known. There is in one of the Platonic dialogues a striking picture of Ion, the rhapsodist, who went from place to place and, in embroidered dress and wreath, addressed as many as twenty thousand persons at a time. He was carried out of himself "in the recitation of some striking passage, such as the apparition of Odysseus leaping forth on the floor, recognized by the suitors and casting his arrows at his feet, or the description of Achilles rushing at Hector, or the sorrows of Andromache, Hecuba or Priam."[1] At the tale of pity his eyes

[1] Translation by Jowett.

were filled with tears, and when he spoke of horrors his hair stood on end and his heart throbbed. From Plato's "Protagoras" we learn of the large place occupied by the writings of Homer in the education of Greek youth during the great Attic period. The Greeks regarded him as their earliest historian and as an authority. Herodotus and the later biographers accepted early traditions of an actual Homer (who had lived about 850 B.C.), the author of both Iliad and Odyssey. Modern literary criticism has been much concerned for a century or more with the Homeric question. Fascinating as the subject is, we cannot enter into it in this place. The identity of Homer cannot be determined. While it is not certain that one poet produced both Iliad and Odyssey, there has been in recent years a strong movement in the direction of accepting a single authorship.[1] Scholarship and archæology seem to prove the existence of the Homeric Troy and a general Greek expedition which resulted in its overthrow after a long siege.

The background. Life in the Homeric Age (approximately 1000 B.C.) was in most respects exceedingly primitive. Travel by water was by means of boats, covered only at bow and stern and propelled by oars, or by a sail when the breeze was favorable. Easy stages were made by daylight from island to island until the mainland was reached. The Homeric geographical knowledge is limited by the Ægean Sea and the surrounding lands. Beyond is a region of rumor and terror. To the north are nomads, to the south "swart faces," "remotest of men." Odysseus' journeys are in the realm of fancy. Homer thinks of the world as a round plane about which flows the river Oceanus, and of the sky as a roof supported by pillars upheld by Atlas.

The main occupations of the people in Homeric times were agriculture and the raising of cattle. The chase was popular; fishing was looked down upon. Flesh was the principal food, and wine diluted by water was the universal drink. Many of the metals were known, and formidable and artistic armor was already fashioned. Slaves did the menial work. Weaving was a favorite occupation of the women. The house of a chieftain was commodious, and free

[1] See Scott's "The Unity of Homer."

hospitality was dispensed. We have a fine picture of graciousness and good taste in the account of the house of Priam in the Iliad and of Menelaus and Helen in the Odyssey, while by way of contrast a view is given of a house in disorder—Penelope struggling with untoward conditions. There seems to have been free social intercourse between the sexes; monogamy was universal. The picture presented by Homer is perhaps drawn too favorably, for we must remember that the epics were recited in court circles, and disagreeable incidents were largely excluded. In our own society Helen would be looked upon askance, yet she is taken back by Menelaus and restored to her full position at his court.

It was a time of piracy and robbery on sea and land. Enemies were treated brutally and dead bodies defiled. The system of government was primitive: the king was little more than a chieftain, whose power was slight except in time of war. Single combat seems to have been the rule on the battlefield. Great heroes are described at length and the common soldier is ignored.

> "But when he heard one of the lower sort
> Shouting and brawling, with the royal wand
> He smote him, and reproved him sharply, thus:
> 'Friend, take thy seat in quiet, and attend
> To what thy betters say.'"[1]

We learn little from Homer of the condition of the poor.

Mahaffy makes an interesting comparison between the Homeric hero and the medieval knight. The cardinal principles of the latter involve courage, truth, compassion, and loyalty. The princes of the Iliad and the Odyssey are frequently brave, with a certain furious rage that brings certain victory, but their courage is spasmodic. Even Hector does not disdain to flee before the onset of Achilles. Both gods and men have a low standard of truthfulness: deceit is frequent, and the wily Odysseus is praised. Compassion is not instinctive but occasional, the rights of women are frequently ignored, and old age is not commonly honored. In general, loyalty is at a

[1] Translation by Bryant.

discount, and there is a notable lack of allegiance to superior authority. Moral ideas check men, but gods are under no restraint, as is clear from Hayman's description of Pallas Athene: "Her character is without tenderness or tie of any sort: it never owns obligation, it never feels pain or privation, it is pitiless; with no gross appetites, its activity is busy and restless, its partisanship unscrupulous, its policy astute, and its dissimulation profound."

At death the Homeric hero is accorded elaborate funeral rites and his body is cremated. The rites are important, since until they are performed his spirit cannot mingle with other spirits in Hades. On the way to Hades is Erebus, a place of gloom. In the nether world a spirit is "strengthless," although its occupation is that of the living man. Odysseus is able to converse with the spirits by giving them strength through a draught of the blood of a sheep.

The characters of the Iliad and the Odyssey. On the Greek side there are eight heroes of the first rank. Agamemnon, commander in chief of the expedition against Troy, is king of Mycenæ. His brother, Menelaus—the theft of whose wife, Helen, by Paris, son of Priam of Troy, is the occasion of the expedition—is petulant, a mighty warrior, an implacable enemy. Achilles; Ajax Telamon; Diomed; the aged Nestor; Patroclus, friend of Achilles; and the wise and crafty Odysseus complete the circle. In the Iliad Achilles is the chief character, and his "wrath" the controlling element. In the Odyssey we are concerned with Odysseus, who is now "the much-enduring" and altogether a finer personality than in the earlier epic.

Opposed to the Greeks are the no less redoubtable leaders of the Trojans, to whom Homer does full justice: Priam, the king; his sons, Hector, Paris, and Deïphobus; their relative Æneas; and Glaucus and Sarpedon. Of this number Hector is the great heroic figure. Only Achilles is able to overthrow him.

Hecuba, Andromache, and Helen in the Iliad, and Nausicaa, Penelope, and the restored Helen in the Odyssey are all clearly and admirably drawn. In a barbaric age these women are sensitive, gracious, delicate, courageous, beautiful—all types of true womanliness.

The Olympic gods, dwelling in their home among the clouds and mingling in the affairs of men, make interesting figures, as clearly defined as the Homeric men and women. Zeus (Jupiter) aimed at impartiality in the fortunes of Troy. Hera (Juno), Athene (Minerva), and Poseidon (Neptune) favored the Greeks; Aphrodite (Venus) and Ares (Mars), the Trojans. Phœbus Apollo took sometimes one side, sometimes the other.

The following outline indicates in very condensed form the material of the Iliad and the Odyssey:

THE ILIAD

It is the tenth year of the war, and the Greeks are on the plain of Troy besieging the city. A furious quarrel arises in the Greek camp between Agamemnon and Achilles over the female captive Briseis, who is claimed by Agamemnon. Achilles yields the point, but withdraws from the conflict and sulks in his tent. Nevertheless Agamemnon, misled by a dream, induces his host to make a general attack upon the Trojans. At the moment of attack Paris, spurred on by Hector, challenges Menelaus to single combat, the result to decide the war. Paris is worsted, but is saved by Aphrodite and there is no decision. The gods succeed in breaking the truce between the two armies, and a furious general battle is waged, with heroic exploits by Diomed, Ajax, and Hector. The Greeks, with fortune against them, are driven back to their camp and build a wall for protection. Zeus commands that the gods shall be impartial. An embassy, headed by Odysseus, is sent to Achilles, for the Greeks are in sore straits, but Achilles answers with scorn and withholds his assistance. In the ensuing battle Agamemnon does heroic deeds until he is wounded, but by slow degrees the Greeks lose ground, and finally Hector breaks through the Greek wall at the head of his troops. However, the god Poseidon at this point eludes the vigilance of Zeus and aids the Greeks in person. Both sides show great prowess. Hector is wounded by Ajax, but he is restored by Apollo, and the Trojans force the Greeks back to their ships, where Ajax proves the chief tower of defense. Patroclus pleads the Greek cause with his friend Achilles and, borrowing the armor of Achilles, appears in the Greek ranks in the guise of the mighty leader, thus bringing a turn in the fortunes of the Greeks. Back the Trojans are driven, but Patroclus is ultimately slain by Hector. There is a desperate struggle for his body. Achilles, informed of the loss of his friend, is filled with grief, and his

rage against Hector is unbounded. He is reconciled to Agamemnon and enters the fight clad in a glorious suit of armor forged by Hephæstus. The battle is on a stupendous scale; even the gods descend from high Olympus and join forces with both sides. Æneas is saved from Achilles only by the interposition of Poseidon, and Hector by Apollo. In his rage Achilles even insults the god of the river, who fights with him until Hephæstus interferes. At last the Trojans, fleeing before Achilles, seek refuge within their gates, but Hector remains to engage in mortal combat with Achilles. In momentary terror he turns and flees and is driven three times around the walls of Troy, until Athene by a trick induces him to face his enemy. Meanwhile Zeus weighs the lots in his golden scales, and the Trojan hero's death is decreed. Hector is slain by Achilles. News of the tragedy causes consternation and sorrow in the city Achilles drags the body of Hector exultantly around Troy, returns to camp, and there presides over the elaborate funeral rites in honor of Patroclus. The aged Priam of Troy comes by night to plead with Achilles for the body of Hector. His prayer is granted, and Priam returns. With the funeral of Hector the poem closes.

THE ODYSSEY

Ten years have passed since Troy's fall. Various adventures have hindered Odysseus from reaching his home in Ithaca, and he is now in an island of the far west, detained by the sea nymph Calypso. Athene, planning for his release, visits Ithaca and urges Telemachus, the son of Odysseus, to go in quest of his father. His journey carries him as far as Sparta, where he visits Menelaus and Helen and learns of Odysseus' whereabouts. Penelope in his absence, though sore beset by boisterous and insolent suitors, is comforted by Athene. Calypso is now forced by the gods to let Odysseus go. The hero builds a raft and sails away, only to be wrecked by his old enemy Poseidon. Saved by the goddess Ino, he is cast on the shore of the land of the Phæacians. Odysseus discovers the princess Nausicaa, who leads him to her father's court. Here he narrates his adventures since leaving Troy—first in Thrace, then among the Lotus-eaters, then in the land of the Cyclopes. He tells of his experiences with the wind god, Æolus, and the consequent disaster; of his ill luck with the barbarous Læstrygonians; of the sorceries of Circe; of his visit to the abode of the dead and his talks with departed spirits; of the Sirens, and of the frightful monsters Scylla and Charybdis; of the slaughter of the sacred cattle of the sun, the loss of his men, and his final escape to Calypso's isle. The friendly Phæacians convey Odys-

seus to Ithaca, and here, with the help of Athene, he takes the disguise of an old beggar. He talks to Eumæus, his long-time swineherd, but is not recognized. Telemachus at this point returns from his journey and in the dwelling of Eumæus meets his father, who reveals himself. A plan is made for the overthrow of the suitors. Arrived at the palace in his beggar's garb, Odysseus is recognized by his old dog Argos. Penelope does not know him, but she discloses many facts regarding her present situation. By chance Odysseus' old nurse, Eurycleia, discovers his identity, but guards the secret. A trial of skill with the bow of Odysseus is now proposed to the suitors by Penelope, but in the attempt none of them can as much as bend the bow. The supposed beggar performs the task with ease. Odysseus now throws off his disguise and, with the aid of Telemachus and two others, slays the suitors. Penelope in joy discovers her lord. In two episodes Hermes conducts the souls of the suitors to Hades, and Odysseus visits his aged father, Laertes. The poem ends with the solemn peace made between Odysseus and the Ithacans.

Technical matters. Homer's verse form is dactylic hexameter. It is a form not very familiar to us, though occasionally used, as by Longfellow in "Evangeline." A few lines from Matthew Arnold's experiments in translating Homer in the original meter will be illuminating:

> "'I of myself know well, that here I am destined to perish,
> Far from my father and mother dear: for all that I will not
> Stay this hand from fight, till the Trojans are utterly routed.'
> So he spake and drove with a cry his steeds into battle."

Seymour says:

"The language was the most graceful and flexible which the world has ever known. The verse itself would indicate that epic poetry had been cultivated in Greece long before Homer's day. Its laws are fully fixed: its favorite and its forbidden pauses; the places where a light and those where a heavy movement is preferred. No verse known to man is so well suited to a long Greek narrative poem. No other verse has less monotony or more dignity and stateliness. It was nobly 'described and exemplified' by Coleridge's lines:

> 'Strongly it bears us along in swelling and limitless billows;
> Nothing before and nothing behind but the sky and the ocean.'"

In the Iliad and the Odyssey there are twenty-four books each, of differing length (the shortest about four hundred lines and the longest about nine hundred). The Iliad is the more imaginative, the Odyssey the more diversified. Both are written in what Matthew Arnold terms "the grand style." He says, "Homer is rapid in his movement, Homer is plain in his words and style, Homer is simple in his ideas, Homer is noble in his manner." Epithets and similes abound. Of the latter there are one hundred and eighty in the Iliad and a much smaller number in the Odyssey.

Much of the attractiveness and nobility of these epics disappears, of course, in the translation, yet the verse renderings of Chapman, Pope, Cowper, and Bryant are all good, as well as the prose translation of Lang, Leaf, and Myers (Iliad) and that of Butcher and Lang (Odyssey). Palmer's rhythmical prose version of the Odyssey should also be mentioned. The extracts given below are taken for the sake of unity from one translation, that of Bryant.

Homeric characteristics and poetic qualities. The actual events of the Iliad are confined to a few days. The same sense of unity and compression is gained in the Odyssey by the device of having Odysseus tell to the Phæacian king at a single sitting his varied adventures during the preceding years. The narrative moves on swiftly. In the Iliad the wrath of Achilles dominates everything. His quarrel with Agamemnon affects the Greeks unfavorably at once, as later his fierce rage against Hector spells ruin for the Trojans. Hector is doomed long before Zeus lifts the scales. In the Odyssey the impression is conveyed early that Odysseus' long travels away from home are about to close and that vengeance upon the suitors is imminent.

Both epics abound in great scenes, as the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles, Hector's parting with Andromache before the battle, the death of Patroclus, the heroic conflict between Hector and Achilles, Odysseus' experience with Polyphemus, the enchantments of Circe, the visit to the dead, the episode of Nausicaa and her maidens, the slaughter of the suitors.

To examine in detail both poems would carry us beyond our limits. But let us make a brief study of the Iliad. Our first impres-

sion is of sheer barbarism—blood, dreadful carnage, hatred, ferocious cruelty, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth:

"They met each other man to man; they rushed
Like wolves to combat. Cruel strife looked on
Rejoicing."

"As on some tall rock
Two vultures with curved talons and hooked beaks,
Fight screaming, so these two with furious cries
Advanced against each other."

Achilles is as brave as a lion, but also as savage. "With him there dwells no touch of pity."

"Amidst them all the great Achilles stood,
Putting his armor on; he gnashed his teeth;
His eyes shot fire; a grief too sharp to bear
Was in his heart, as, filled with rage against
The men of Troy, he cased his limbs in mail."

"'Accursed Hector, never talk to me
Of covenants. Men and lions plight no faith,
Nor wolves agree with lambs, but each must plan
Evil against the other. So between
Thyself and me no compact can exist,
Or understood intent.'"

But Homer moves in a large and spacious world, and along with the barbarism of his times, so faithfully recorded, we get as powerful a picture of heroism and great deeds.

"Upon his brow
The gleaming helmet nodded as he moved.
On every side he tried the phalanxes,
If haply they might yield to his assault,
Made from beneath that buckler; but the Greeks
In spirit or in order wavered not."

"Then they did fight like fire. You could not say
The sun was safe, nor yet the moon, so thick
A darkness gathered over the brave men
Around the corpse of Menœtiades."

The Iliad displays a close observation of men and nature. Many of the similes used are very beautiful and are characterized by great exactness.

"The assembly wavered to and fro
Like the long billows of the Icarian Sea,
Roused by the East wind and the South, that rush
Forth from the cloudy seat of Father Jove;
Or like the harvest-field, when west winds stoop
Suddenly from above, and toss the wheat."

Pallas causes a flame to appear upon Diomed's head,

"Like to the autumnal star that shines in heaven
Most brightly when new-bathed in ocean tides."

Diomed trembles as he beholds the god Mars,

"And, as one who, journeying
Along a way he knows not, having crossed
A place of drear extent, before him sees
A river rushing swiftly towards the deep,
And all its tossing current white with foam,
And stops and turns, and measures back his way,
So then did Diomed withdraw."

"Not with such noise the ocean-billows lash
The mainland, when the violent north wind
Tumbles them shoreward; not with such a noise
Roar the fierce flames within the mountain glen,
When leaping upward to consume the trees;
And not so loudly howls the hurricane
Among the lofty branches of the oaks
When in its greatest fury, as now rose

The din of battle from the hosts that rushed
Against each other with terrific cries."

There are a thousand human touches in the Iliad—pictures of life, pathetic incidents, moments of high resolve, reminiscences of personal experiences and common joys.

"At once they reared the mast
And opened the white sails; the canvas swelled
Before the wind, and hoarsely round the keel
The dark waves murmured as the ship flew on."

"Paris in the Trojan van pressed on,
In presence like a god. A leopard's hide
Was thrown across his shoulders, and he bore
A crooked bow and falchion."

We have a picture of Helen in the palace,

"Weaving there
An ample web, a shining double-robe,
Whereon were many conflicts fairly wrought."

Hector's farewell to Andromache and his child is very beautiful. The boy is frightened at the nodding plume on his father's head, but Hector removes his headdress and kisses the boy and tosses him up in play before he departs. In another place Hector proposes nobly to Ajax on the field of battle:

"Let us now
Each with the other leave some noble gift,
That all men, Greek or Trojan, thus may say:
'They fought indeed in bitterness of heart,
But they were reconciled, and parted friends.'"

Patroclus, seeking comfort for the disasters of the Greeks, is compared to

"A little girl that by her mother's side
Runs, importuning to be taken up,

And plucks her by the robe, and stops her way,
And looks at her, and cries, until at last
She rests within her arms."

Vulcan on the shield of Achilles engraves

"A fair, broad pasture, in a pleasant glade,
Full of white sheep, and stalls, and cottages,
And many a shepherd's fold with sheltering roof."

In the same connection a village dance is described:

"The maids wore wreaths of flowers; the young men swords
Of gold in silver belts. They bounded now
In a swift circle, . . .
Then again they crossed
Each other, darting to their former place."

The death of Hector is tragically treated:

"His father, who so loved him, piteously
Bewailed him; and in all the streets of Troy
The people wept aloud, with such lament
As if the towery Ilium were in flames
Even to its loftiest roofs."

Gods and men. The Homeric gods, though human in form and subject to human wants and affections, were immortal and were endowed with power greatly exceeding that of mortals, even if liable to certain limitations of energy and knowledge. To the early Greek, religion was an interpretation of nature and of human passions, and he impersonated the earth, the sky, the sea, love, war, wisdom, music. The caves and fountains had their nymphs, the woods their dryads. The winds, the morning star, the dawn, all had fair personalities. G. Lowes Dickinson, in commenting on a passage of great beauty in Iliad 23, where the winds fan the flame of the funeral pyre of Patroclus, says:

"All that is unintelligible in the world, all that is alien to man, has been drawn, as it were, from its dark retreat, clothed in radiant form, and presented to the mind as a glorified image of itself. Every phe-

nomenon of nature, night and 'rosy-fingered' dawn, earth and sun, winds, rivers, and seas, sleep and death—all have been transformed into divine and conscious agents, to be propitiated by prayer, interpreted by divination, and comprehended by passions and desires identical with those which stir and control mankind."[1]

Religion made the Greek "at home in the world." It stirred his imagination and intellect, but not his conscience. To quote Dickinson further:

"There was no knowing precisely what a god might want; there was no knowing what he might be going to do. If a man fell into trouble, no doubt he had offended somebody, but it was not so easy to say whom or how. . . . It was a difficult thing to ascertain or to move the will of the gods, and one must help oneself as best one could. The Greek, accordingly, helped himself by an elaborate system of sacrifice and prayer and divination, a system which had no connection with an internal spiritual life, but the object of which was simply to discover and if possible to affect the divine purposes."

There are many pictures in Homer of the gods and of their relations with men. These are of great and curious interest. Zeus and Athene loom large and frequently inspire terror.

"No man dared to drink
Who had not paid to Saturn's mighty son
The due libation."

But even Zeus was capricious and uncertain. His councils on high Olympus sometimes descended to burlesque—the only burlesque of which Homer was guilty. And great Zeus himself was subject to a higher power, that of Fate.

"The All-Father raised the golden balance high,
And, placing in the scales two lots which bring
Death's long dark sleep,—one lot for Peleus' son,
And one for knightly Hector,—by the midst
He poised the balance. Hector's fate sank down
To Hades, and Apollo left the field."

[1] The Greek View of Life, p. 7.

One last passage may be added, exhibiting the balance and common sense of the heroic Hector in the midst of the perplexities that surrounded him:

> "Thou dost ask
> That I be governed by the flight of birds,
> Which I regard not, whether to the right
> And toward the morning and the sun they fly,
> Or toward the left and evening. We should heed
> The will of mighty Jupiter, who bears
> Rule over gods and men. One augury
> There is, the surest and the best,—to fight
> For our own land."

The Homeric gods are glorified men, gods in the likeness of men, but the noble Hector seems to be a more notable thing—a man in the likeness of the gods.

Hesiod, a Greek poet who lived probably a century later than Homer, seems to have been a lower-class farmer of Bœotia. He gives a complete and depressing picture of his times. "Works and Days," a poem of over eight hundred verses, is his chief work. It is didactic, or of a sermonizing or instructional character. It warns against idleness, enjoins honest labor, tells of the tasks of the farmer, and gives a calendar of lucky days. There are some eloquent passages, but as a whole the poem is dull and heavy. Virgil's "Georgics," written eight centuries later, was, however, inspired by "Works and Days." The other poem of consequence attributed to Hesiod is "Theogony," which presents an account of the origin and history of the gods and of the Greek heroes. Hesiod is thus a student of mythology as well as an agriculturist. His influence on later writers and thinkers was considerable.

The Lyric Age

From the times of Hesiod until the general period of the Persian invasions (roughly from 735 to 480 B.C.) the only conspicuous writings that have come down to us are fragments from seven of nine famous lyric poets. The beginnings of lyric poetry do not go

back much before 700 B.C. There was thus after Homer's time a dark age of almost two centuries which yielded no literature. The decadent epic was passing away and the lyric had not arrived.

Politically this general period was of great importance. The Greeks colonized as far north as the Black Sea, as far east as the island of Cyprus, and as far west as Sicily, the mainland of Italy, and the coast of later France. Their rapidly developing civilization was communicated to the peoples of these distant lands. Asia Minor was for long a very important center of Greek thought and literature. In the Greek peninsula, first Corinth and then Athens were the great commercial centers. The age of the nobles passed into the age of the tyrants. Solon, the first statesman of Greece, gave through his reforms an impulse toward democracy and rendered a great service to Athens. Developments not only in commerce and industry but in architecture, sculpture, music, and philosophy were taking place, looking forward to the glorious Attic Age.

Mahaffy enumerates several social traits and characteristics of the period. The Greeks had a keen love of pleasure and a desire for wealth for the sake of the enjoyments of life. They hated old age. Instances of selfishness, factional rivalries, and dishonesty abound; also to some extent a lack of personal bravery was exhibited. On the other hand, moderation and quietness had come to be well-recognized Greek qualities. The Greeks believed in hospitality and practiced it. Their attitude toward women and children was on the whole commendable (note the extract from Simonides as given below). The Homeric idea of love had deepened and expanded into something like what we mean by the term today. There was a leveling of class distinctions, a stronger democratic feeling. The ideas of Solon and Pisistratus on these subjects appealed strongly to the Greeks. Less thought was given to ancient glories than formerly, and there was a wholesome sense of the present. The lyrists were realists. Culture and the intellectual life showed an enormous advance. The Greeks were "tortured by an insatiable curiosity and a fierce desire for perfection."

Religious ideas had also changed. Polytheism of the older kind had passed; it was no longer possible to build a religious creed on

the old myths. While the average standard of morals was none too high, the better minds were finding a surer motive for honesty and goodness than the wrath of the gods of the Homeric world. The old idea of the conflicting passions of independent gods had disappeared. The Olympic contests, religious in their impulse, were established as early as 776 B.C. The sanctuary and oracle of Apollo at Delphi became famous throughout the Greek world.

Centuries later the critics of Alexandria, looking back to this period, distinguished nine lyric poets of the first rank. Their work covered two hundred years (650 to 450 B.C.). Only fragments remain, so beautiful and significant that the loss of the major part is most regrettable.

Sappho. Lyric poetry is subjective and has to do with the individual—his hopes, dreams, longings, and various moods. Greek lyric poetry was intended to be sung, either by a single voice (Æolian lyrics) or as chorals (Dorian lyrics). It was written in stanzas of widely differing length and metrical form. We distinguish court poets, poets of the aristocratic class, and poets of the people. Among the nine chief lyrists all parts of Greece and its colonies were represented. Mention must be made particularly of the Æolian island of Lesbos, famed for its charm of nature and greatness of art and for the cultivation of its people. This was the home of Sappho (sixth century B.C.), probably the greatest woman poet the world has known. Professor Jebb writes:

"The fragments of her poetry are unique, both for their wonderful melody and for the intensity of passion which the musical words express. They also show the finest sense of beauty in the natural world: in the night sky, when the stars pale before the full moon; or in places where cool streams are shadowed by fruit trees, and 'slumber is shed' on weary eyelids 'from the rustling leaves.'"

She was the head of a school of poets in Lesbos. The following translation (by J. M. Edmonds), with conjectural restorations, is of a poem addressed to a pupil named Atthis, referring to another pupil, who had evidently taken up her residence across the sea at Sardis:

"Atthis, our beloved Mnasidica dwells at far-off Sardis, but she often sends her thoughts hither, thinking how once we used to live in the days when she thought thee like a glorious goddess, and loved thy song the best. And now she shines among the dames of Lydia as after sunset the rosy-fingered moon beside the stars that are about her, when she spreads her light o'er briny sea and eke o'er flowery field, while the good dew lies on the ground and the roses revive and the dainty anthrysc and the honey-lotus with all its blooms. And oftentime when our beloved, wandering abroad, calls to mind her gentle Atthis, the heart devours her tender breast with the pain of longing; and she cries aloud to us to come thither; and what she says we know full well, thou and I, for Night, the many-eared, calls it to us across the dividing sea."

Sappho's poems were arranged in nine books, but all have disappeared with the exception of a few precious fragments. Such of our English poets as Swinburne, Rossetti, Symonds, and others have translated these fragments with rare felicity. Note Symonds's free rendering of a brief poem of Sappho:

"Yea, thou shalt die,
And lie
Dumb in the silent tomb;
Nor of thy name
Shall there be any fame
In ages yet to be or years to come:
For of the flowering rose
Which on Pieria blows,
Thou hast no share:
But in sad Hades' house,
Unknown, inglorious,
'Mid the dim shades that wander there
Shalt thou flit forth and haunt the filmy air."

The following is a combination of two fragments translated by Rossetti and entitled "Beauty":

I

"Like the sweet apple which reddens upon the topmost bough,
A-top on the topmost twig,—which the pluckers forgot somehow,—
Forgot it not, nay, but got it not, for none could get it till now.

II

"Like the wild hyacinth flower which on the hills is found,
Which the passing feet of the shepherds for ever tear and wound,
Until the purple blossom is trodden upon the ground."

Pindar. A considerable amount of the poetry of Pindar has been preserved. He and Simonides were the greatest representatives of the second period of Greek lyric poetry, which, instead of being local in its appeal, was addressed to all Greece. The Greeks themselves regarded Pindar as their chief lyric poet, and "he was so beloved by Apollo that he even received a share of the offerings." Centuries after his death there was displayed in the temple at Delphi an iron chair in which he had been accustomed to sit while chanting his songs to Apollo. His death did not occur until 443 B.C. Such of his poems as have come down to us entire are odes of victory celebrating the Olympic games. The fragments consist of hymns, songs of praise, choral songs, dirges, etc.—a great variety. His home was at Thebes, and he is the greatest of all Thebans. He accepted the religious beliefs of his time, but with striking reservations. His character seems to have been hard and self-centered. "I mean to live for myself, not for someone else," he said to Simonides. Matthew Arnold speaks of Pindar as "the poet on whom above all other poets the power of style seems to have exercised an inspiring and intoxicating effect." Pindar's poems contain numberless images drawn from an astonishing variety of sources—from common life, from sports and pastimes, from nature, from travel. His odes are generally developed from mythological stories. Their religious and moral sentiments are striking. Pindar himself did not fail to recognize his originality as poet and artist. "Mine be it," he said, "to invent new strains, mine the skill to hold my course in the chariot of the Muses; and may courage go with me, and the power of ample grasp." Professor Jebb has translated passages showing Pindar's feeling for nature: "The chamber of the hours is opened, and delicate plants perceive the fragrant spring." Etna, "pillar of the sky, nurse of keen snow all the year," sends forth "pure springs of fire unapproachable." Pin-

dar's love of art in every form is unequaled among the Greek poets. His poetry is noble and nobly conceived, though sometimes difficult and obscure. One of his fine emotional passages is thus translated by Mackail:

"Things of a day, what are we and what are we not? The shadow of a dream is humankind; yet when a god-given splendor falls, light shines radiant upon men and life is sweet."

Simonides. At the close of the lyric period the widespread Ionian culture was concentrating in Athens. Simonides (556–469 B.C.) lived on the island of Ceos, close to Attica; much of his life was spent in Athens. The story is told that for a time he shared with Pindar and Æschylus the hospitality of Hiero, the tyrant of Syracuse. Simonides was a great and original poet. He wrote dirges and epitaphs, odes of victory, and odes in praise of men. His verses on the heroes of Thermopylæ have a marked beauty and elevation even in the following translation, though the translator, Jebb, says that they have "a beauty of form which no prose version can even suggest":

"Glorious was the fortune of those who died at Thermopylæ, and fair is their fate; their tomb is an altar. Others are bewailed, but they are remembered; others are pitied, but they are praised. Such a monument shall never moulder, nor shall it be defaced by all-conquering time. The sepulchre of brave men has taken the glory of Hellas to dwell with it; be Leonidas the witness, Sparta's king, who has left behind him the great beauty of prowess and an immortal name."

Mackail pays tribute to the settled perfection of Simonides and to his "spontaneous balance of thought and expression which makes great literature." Wordsworth in a beautiful sonnet calls Simonides "the noblest Poet that can be, who sang in ancient Greece his moving lay." The finest fragment that survives of the poetry of Simonides is a dirge: the mother Danaë, with the infant Perseus asleep in her arms, is comforted at the thought that her babe is unconscious of the dangers of the dark and stormy sea. Dean Milman's version follows:

"When rude around the high-wrought ark
The tempests raged, the waters dark
Around the mother tossed and swelled;
With not unmoistened cheek, she held
Her Perseus in her arms, and said:
'What sorrows bow this hapless head!
Thou sleep'st the while, thy gentle breast
Is heaving in unbroken rest;
In this our dark unjoyous home,
Clamped with the rugged brass, the gloom
Scarce broken by the doubtful light
That gleams from yon dim fires of night.
But thou, unwet thy clustering hair,
Heed'st not the billows raging wild,
The moanings of the bitter air,
Wrapt in thy purple robe, my beauteous child!
Oh, seemed this peril perilous to thee,
How sadly to my words of fear
Wouldst thou bend down thy listening ear!
But now sleep on, my child! sleep thou, wide sea!
Sleep, my unutterable agony!
O change thy counsels, Jove, our sorrows end!
And if my rash intemperate zeal offend,
For my child's sake, his father, pardon me!'"

It is not possible to dwell longer upon the poetry of the lyric period. The reader is referred especially to Mackail's remarkable study in his volume of "Lectures on Greek Poetry," to Symonds's "The Greek Poets," and to other similar books.

The Attic Age (480–300 B.C.)

We have now reached the great fifth century B.C., which was to witness the flowering of the Greek genius in Attica, with its center in Athens. The Athenian Greeks were Ionians, but they represented a racial blend which rendered them superior to the Ionians of the colonies. It is well to remember a few important dates and events: 492 B.C., the year of the first Persian expedition against Greece; 404, the year when the Athenian Empire was brought to

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a close and Athens was taken by the Spartans; the short-lived Spartan political ascendancy which followed the latter event; the succeeding Theban rule; and finally the meteoric career of Philip of Macedon and of his son Alexander the Great (ending with the death of the latter in 323 B.C.), constituting one of the wonders of military history. Greek civilization now dominated all western Asia and southern Europe.

The Persian wars and the Greek civil wars kept Greece in a turmoil during a large part of the Attic Age, though they brought out the heroic traits in the character of the race. Simonides sang of the men of Tegea, "Their choice was to leave their children a city flourishing in freedom, and to lay down their own lives in the front of the battle."[1]

Under Pericles Athens became the teacher and leader of the Greek world. It probably had not more than thirty thousand free inhabitants, but its contribution during a single generation to the thought and culture of the human race was an unparalleled one. Important new conceptions of the State, and the rapid development of architecture and sculpture, of the drama and other branches of literature, and of philosophical thought, are associated inevitably with the age of Pericles.

The Greek mind, to be sure, was still partly undeveloped. We find constant traces of rudeness and harshness; a lack of consideration for old age or human weakness; dishonesty and selfishness, even treachery, in public and private life. If there was a high-minded Socrates, there was also an Alcibiades—licentious, reckless, and unfeeling. Aristophanes, in his castigations of the life of the times, reveals many flaws in the Greek character. The other side of the picture, however, is more pleasing. Even if we judge the age by the average individual, the standard seems to have been high. The stories of Herodotus exhibit kindly and tender feeling. Some of the most glorious types of womanhood conceived in the literature of Greece were produced during this period—witness Antigone and Alcestis. We have glimpses of home life among the lower classes which make a strong appeal to us. The Greeks were pleas-

[1] Translation by Jebb.

ant and conversational, but this does not mean that they were superficial. Their intellectual acuteness is proved by their attraction to the great themes of the Attic tragedians. Ethical and religious ideas were much more profound than during the preceding period.

Apart from mere matters of material progress, the Periclean times seem strangely like our own; the intervening centuries offer no obstacle to our understanding of the ancient Greek. If he could walk the streets of our cities, the vitality and urge and the open-mindedness and catholic tastes of our generation would please him mightily. We could teach him something, but it may be doubted whether our contribution to him would be nearly as significant as his contribution to us.

The Greek drama. On the side of literature the chief glory of the Attic Age was its development of the drama. The epic deals with the past, the lyric with the present, the drama with the past in the present. At the basis of the Greek drama is the religious festival. The great Greek god was Zeus; his interpreter was Apollo, at whose shrine the Hellenic games took place. The popular god Dionysus (Bacchus)—the god of wine, or in a larger sense the god of enthusiasm or the spirit of life—was associated with a religious exercise accompanied by music and dance. In its early form this was perhaps no more than an impromptu song of revelry, a chorus of men in fantastic costume dancing at some local shrine in honor of Dionysus. Then the song became more deliberate, the exercise more formal, and a leader for the chorus was assigned, with perhaps an occasional colloquy between the leader and the chorus. The poet who wrote the lyrics would naturally be the leader, and the next development would be the impersonation of a few parts by the leader, giving opportunity for some little dramatic action. Thespis has the honor of evolving this important new idea. At the spring festival in 534 B.C. he won the first tragic contest instituted by the Athenian state. By the time that the earliest tragedy of Æschylus, the first Greek tragedian, was produced, the art had developed wonderfully; but there was still the lyric basis, the choral song or ode, and this constituted the main part of the play.

Great interest naturally attaches to the open theater in Athens where were first given the plays of the Attic tragedians. Contestants were invited to exhibit their tragedies here for a state prize during the spring Dionysian festival. Visitors came from all parts of Greece and sat all day to listen. It was a true gathering of the people, for the semicircular seats on the hillside leading up toward the Acropolis would accommodate seventeen thousand people. The theater was open to the sky, and at its base was a circular dancing-floor, the orchestra. Originally the stage for the actors was not separate from the orchestra used by the chorus. There was no embellishment, beyond something to represent the tomb of the hero or the altar to the god, which might aid the imagination in the setting of the scene. A building for the actors' dressing-room gave way later to a more elaborate building with doors and colonnades which served as a background for the play. The actors' parts were all taken by men. Masks were worn, a disadvantage from our point of view; but it must be remembered that the distances were so great that the change of facial expression could not well be seen, and that masks were helpful in a rapid change of parts, there being only a few actors in any play. Æschylus' plays were nearly all handled by only two actors. Sophocles was the first to introduce a third.

As to the themes, these were taken mostly from the old hero stories dear to the Greek race. Thus the audience, though without program or text and without scenery to help the imagination, could anticipate in general the development of the plot and give themselves up to the play as a work of art. It was left, in other words, to the genius of the tragic poet to handle a well-worn theme in such a new and effective way as to win the prize. The words of the actors would commonly explain the place of the action. Night scenes, scenes within doors, city scenes, country scenes, were all represented in one open place under the bright Athenian sky, and with no change of scenery. The chorus of a Greek play was appropriate to the action and shared to some extent the development of the plot. Nothing definite is known of the nature of the dances and the character of the singing and the accompaniment.

Æschylus. The first of the great tragic poets was born in 525 B.C. He fought at Marathon and at three other battles during the Persian wars. One may well believe that he was a mighty fighter, for there is something of titanic energy and unrestrained power in all his tragedies. His conceptions are bold. His sense of sin and of the weight of the moral law reminds us of the prophets of Israel. When Clayton Hamilton said that Greek tragedy represented a conflict between man and fate, he perhaps had Æschylus particularly in view. Æschylus held that even when a man had offended involuntarily, the evil consequences were certain. His plays are rough-hewn, presenting types rather than detailed studies of character. We have the titles of seventy-two plays produced by him, but only seven of these plays have come down to us. "The Persians" was presented eight years after the battle of Salamis. It is the only historical Greek tragedy extant. The scene is laid in Susa, and the chorus consists of Persian elders. The tragic moment is the announcement of the Persian defeat at Salamis, and the theme is the jealousy of the gods because of the arrogance of men. Another play, "The Suppliants," apparently a very early work, exhibits Zeus as the avenger of sacrilegious violence. "The Seven against Thebes" is concerned with an episode in an old myth, the story of Œdipus. The family curse is represented as descending from father to son, but the sin of the individual is also clearly shown. "Prometheus" likewise is based on an ancient story. The conception is extremely bold. Zeus himself learns wisdom from experience.

Following custom Æschylus presented four plays in succession on a single theme, three forming a trilogy and the fourth being a satyr play as a sort of light epilogue. We have fortunately preserved to us his complete trilogy on the story of Orestes—"Agamemnon," "Choephori" (or the "Libation-Bearers"), and "The Eumenides." In its original form it is a horrible tale of murder and revenge. Æschylus works it over into great tragedy. In the first play Agamemnon returns from Troy in triumph, only to be treacherously slain by his wife Clytemnestra; in the second, Orestes, his son, avenges the murder by killing Clytemnestra; while in the third, Orestes, pursued by the Furies for his act of blood, is saved only

by the vote of Athene at the conclusion of a solemn trial. The "Agamemnon" is generally reckoned as the greatest of the tragedies of Æschylus. Its grandeur must be apparent to every lover of literature.

The scene is laid in front of the royal palace at Argos. Clytemnestra, the guilty queen—a great tragic figure that suggests Lady Macbeth at several points—has arranged for signal fires to herald the return of her lord Agamemnon from Troy. At the opening of the play a watchman, who has been keeping vigil for a year, prays to the gods for relief. The signal appears, and he leaves to inform the queen, while a chorus of Argive elders tells the story of the Trojan War and the disasters which have befallen Trojans and Greeks alike.

"For Mars doth market bodies, and for gold
Gives dust, and in the battle of the bold
Holds the dread scales of Fate.
Burnt cinders, a light burden, but to friends
A heavy freight,
He sends from Troy; the beautiful vase he sends
With dust, for hearts, well lined, on which descends
The frequent tear."[1]

Clytemnestra enters to explain to the chorus hypocritically the reason for the sacrificial fires. A herald, returning from Troy, tells as an eyewitness of the destruction of the city, and in response to the eager questions of the chorus, recounts also the losses of the Greeks. The choral hymn that follows, one of great beauty, condemns Helen for the calamity she has brought upon Greece. Now Agamemnon appears in a triumphal car, with the prophetess-princess Cassandra, his captive and concubine, by his side. Clytemnestra greets him, and prevails upon him to enter the palace by treading across a garment of purple. The chorus and the audience alike are full of forebodings. Agamemnon had sacrificed his daughter Iphigenia before sailing for Troy, had brought back Cassandra destined as a priestess to Apollo, and now had stepped upon the purple sacred to the gods. The chorus sings:

"But now, to doubt resigned,
With smothered fear, all dumb I wait
The unravelling hour; while sparks of fate
Flit through my darksome mind."

[1] Translation by Blackie.

Clytemnestra reënters to attempt to lure Cassandra within. But Cassandra remains silent. Left alone she breaks forth into a sort of prophetic fury. We learn of the evils of the house of Atreus, of the impending doom of Agamemnon, and of the future deed of Orestes:

"The wanderer shall return
To pile the cope-stone on these towering woes.
The gods in heaven a mighty oath have sworn,
To raise anew the father's prostrate fate
By the son's arm."

Cassandra rushes within to meet her own fate. The groans of the dying king are heard. Presently the palace opens, and Clytemnestra is disclosed over the dead body of her husband. Remorseless and cruel, she justifies her bloody deed:

"What I did, I did
Not with a random inconsiderate blow
But from old Hate, and with maturing Time."

Later Ægisthus, her paramour, similarly justifies himself for his share in the murder. The conflicting emotions on the part of the chorus, which remains loyal to the murdered king, are finely portrayed. The first play of the trilogy ends with wrong in the ascendancy, but with the continuation of the story comes vengeance.

A careful study of this tragedy, in conjunction with a Shakespearean tragedy such as "Macbeth," is full of interest and significance.

Sophocles. The second, and in the common opinion the foremost, of the three great tragic poets of Greece was born at Colonus, near Athens, in 496 or 495 and died in 406 B.C. His life spanned, therefore, the greatest period of Greek history; he fortunately did not live to see the capture of Athens. As a youth of fifteen he led the choral dance celebrating the Persian defeat at Salamis. At the age of twenty-seven he produced his first play, and during his long career he was always first or second of the three competing dramatists. According to all accounts his temper was amiable and his life serene. Of the hundred or more of his plays only seven have been preserved complete. There are, however, fragments of many others. If we turn our attention to these fragments (Plumptre's translation), we find quite clearly displayed Sophocles' general attitude toward life:

"In some things be not anxious to inquire;
Far better is it oft to leave them hid."

"It brings some pain, I know, but one must try,
As best one may, to bear the ills of life."

"No good e'er comes of leisure purposeless;
And Heaven ne'er helps the men who will not act."

"'Tis better not to be than vilely live."

"None but the Gods may live untouched by ill."

"'Tis hope that feeds the larger half of men."

"Life, O my son, is sweetest boon of all:
It is not given to men to taste death twice."

In Matthew Arnold's phrase Sophocles "saw life steadily, and saw it whole." Mackail thus sets forth the controlling thought of Sophocles' chief plays:

"The final note in 'Œdipus the King' is, 'Human life, even in its utmost strength and splendor, hangs on the edge of the abyss!' In the 'Œdipus at Colonus' it is, 'Let lamentation be brief, for what has happened was ordained.' In the 'Antigone' it is, 'Lack of wisdom is the greatest of evils.' In the 'Ajax' it goes still deeper: it is the necessity of tragedy for the purpose of life; men must see, must have actual experience, in order to know. Finally, in the 'Trachinians' it takes shape in what is the ultimate and central message of Sophocles, his last word on life, 'Look, and wonder, and think.'"

The same writer says of the "Electra," "Nowhere in Sophocles, nowhere perhaps in poetry, is there a greater sense conveyed of the victoriousness of life, of the way in which it rises anew over its own dead past and lets old sins and sorrows fade away among forgotten things."

Few works in all literature are as magnificent as Sophocles' "Antigone" or "Œdipus the King." Let us examine briefly the second of these plays. We see at once the advance in technical and artistic skill over Æschylus, who was by thirty years the senior of Sophocles. The younger dramatist is swift and certain and clear.

He tells a story powerfully; he keeps the plot well in hand. The dialogue and action are the main considerations—the chorus is strictly subordinate. The theme does not seem remote; recent presentations of the play have been strikingly successful. Œdipus in his pride and Œdipus in his crowning misery,

"Now seeing all things clear, then all things dark,"

is as close to us and as understandable as King Lear. The choral odes are singularly effective; as, for example,

"Ah, race of mortal men,
How as a thing of nought
I count ye, though ye live;
For who is there of men
That more of blessing knows,
Than just a little while
To seem to prosper well,
And, having seemed, to fall?"[1]

The tragic sadness of Œdipus at the climax of his grief is almost too piercing. Blinded by his own act, he exclaims,

"What need for me to see,
When nothing's left for me to look upon?"

At the close Sophocles himself speaks in the words of the chorus:

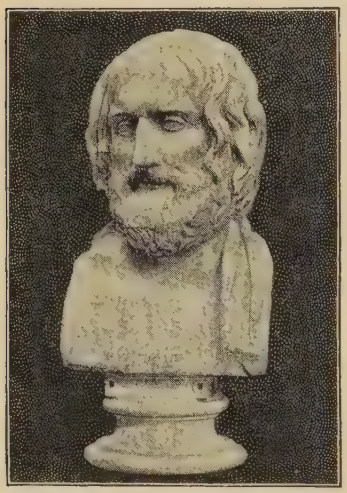
"From hence the lesson learn ye,
To reckon no man happy till ye witness
The closing day: until he pass the border
Which severs life from death, unscathed by sorrow."

Yet this is not, after all, the last word, for Sophocles in his own closing days wrote "Œdipus at Colonus," a poem of rare beauty, exhibiting the blind king purified by his tragic sufferings and reconciled to his Maker.

"The man was led
With nought to mourn for—did not leave the world
As worn with pain and sickness; but his end,
If any ever was, was wonderful."

[1] Translation by Plumptre.

Euripides. The last of the great Greek tragedians was born in 480 B.C., on the very day, it is said, of the battle of Salamis. He was thus only fifteen years younger than Sophocles, but he seems to belong to a different era. The old piety that swayed both Æschylus and Sophocles was passing, and Euripides was a good deal of a rationalist in his way of thinking. He became a poet of ideas. Living largely the life of a recluse, and in his last years, until his death in 406, in voluntary exile in Macedonia, he was not popular with his generation. While he wrote at least seventy-five plays, only five secured the first prize. Ancient and modern critics have found much to condemn in his poetry, his method, and his moral ideas. His prologues are ridiculed as undramatic, his epilogues as half-hearted in their adjustments, his choruses as being unnecessary adjuncts to the action.



EURIPIDES

Yet Euripides, like Molière and Shakespeare, is modern, human, and penetrating. The general form of the play meant less to him than the individual situation, and this is very frequently pathetic and of deep and thrilling interest. He could not free himself altogether from the Greek dramatic conventions, but he was a man of the new school, open to the influences of a new day, an interpreter of that vigorous, inquiring mind of the Greek in his greatest period. Hence Euripides will always attract us powerfully.

Eighteen of his plays remain. They deal in part with the stock subjects of the Athenian drama; in part the poet goes into the by-paths of Greek story and legend. In his "Medea" he presents a cruel and barbarous woman in such a manner as to lift her to the very heights of tragedy. In the "Trojan Women" we are brought

very close to Hecuba, Andromache, and Cassandra at the crisis in their heroic experiences. In the "Alcestis" Euripides gives us a wonderful portrayal of simple, gentle, and self-sacrificing womanhood. The "Iphigenia" is clearly one of the best of all the plays dealing with the story of Orestes. No one can read the "Bacchæ" without appreciating that it is a magnificent poem, at the very heart of Greek myth and the Greek love of beauty.

But it is unnecessary to enumerate others of these plays—so delicate, so full of dramatic situations, so poetic, and at many points so romantic in their impulse. The English reader fortunately has open to him notable translations of the major plays of Euripides. Those of Gilbert Murray are the most conspicuous. Few translations of any foreign literature have been done so sympathetically and happily. They should be known by every lover of literature. Mark the felicity of the following lines from the maiden's song to Dionysus in the "Bacchæ":

"In the elm-woods and the oaken,
There where Orpheus harped of old,
And the trees awoke and knew him,
And the wild things gathered to him,
As he sang among the broken
Glens his music manifold."

Or note this bit of philosophy from the choral song which closes the same play:

"There be many shapes of mystery.
And many things God makes to be,
Past hope or fear.
And the end men looked for cometh not,
And a pain is there where no man thought.
So hath it fallen here."

Again, observe the simple pathos of this passage from the "Trojan Women"—Andromache's farewell to her child, who is about to be cruelly murdered by the Greeks:

"Thou little thing
That curlest in my arms, what sweet scents cling

All round thy neck! Beloved, can it be
All nothing, that this bosom cradled thee
And fostered; all the weary nights, wherethrough
I watched upon thy sickness, till I grew
Wasted with watching? Kiss me. This one time;
Not ever again. . . .

"Oh, ye have found an anguish that outstrips
All tortures of the East, ye gentle Greeks!
Why will ye slay this innocent, that seeks
No wrong?"

Greek comedy was probably as old as tragedy and was a result of the same general impulse. The more serious songs and ideas of the Dionysian festivals were developed into the Greek tragedy; in due course of time the lightsome and burlesque elements took artistic shape and were developed into comedy. The Old Comedy, so called, was at its highest point in the period from 460 to 404 B.C., and its chief representative is Aristophanes. Menander is the best-known poet of the New Comedy, which flourished from 320 to 250 B.C.

The proper aim of comedy was an unsparing criticism of the life of the times. Satire, banter, burlesque, riotous humor, extravagance of all kinds, a licentious spirit, and grossness of allusion,—all these found their place in Greek comedy. It was designed to castigate and to amuse. Leading citizens were impaled for the public delectation. There seemed to be no limitations, no reserve or delicacy. In trying to arrive at an understanding of the Greek nature we must not fail to take into account the unrestrained license of expression belonging to the public presentation of the plays of Old and New Comedy.

What has been said of comedy in general applies to the work of **Aristophanes** (*c.*450–*c.*380 B.C.). But it should be pointed out that this comic writer, along with burlesque and buffoonery, exhibited profound scorn and indignation, and that his serious purpose was to sway public opinion and to remedy the abuses of the day. He was a conservative by nature and had little sympathy with some of the tendencies of his time. His poetic power is very remarkable, for his verse is easy, graceful, and harmonious, always

suited to the subject—short and vivid, joyous, audacious, as the case may be. He has a suitable rhythm for marching and for chanting, appropriate verse for parody—a bewildering profusion of forms and meters. His feeling for nature,—sea and sky and cloud and earth,—for imaginative and fantastic effects, is inimitable. Thus he is undoubtedly one of the great poets of Greece.

The plays of Aristophanes cover a wide range. In all they numbered about fifty; eleven have come down to us. Choruses of wasps, birds, and frogs suggest the unconventional elements in his plays. The dialogues are sometimes broadly farcical and the scenes comic to a degree, ranging from a scene on Olympus or in Hades to the stealing of a Sicilian cheese by a common house dog.

Among Aristophanes' best-known comedies are "The Clouds," "The Birds," and "The Frogs." In the first of these the poet castigates the thinkers and teachers of his day, Socrates in particular. An Athenian gentleman is represented as entering his son in the "thinking-shop" of Socrates in order that he may learn, through the sophistry of the philosopher, how to escape paying his debts. The situations that arise are ludicrous. It is said that on the public presentation of this play Socrates himself stood up in his place in the theater that he might be seen by all. In "The Birds" Aristophanes ridicules, with delicate satire, the ambitions of the Athenians in their expedition against Syracuse. The fanciful birdland of the play signifies the sort of immaterial dreams or castles in the air that men are wont to create in the face of established facts and common sense. With true art Aristophanes conducts us to the home of the birds and presents the world, including the pettiness of mankind, from their point of view. The choric songs of the play are very beautiful. In "The Frogs" the god Dionysus descends to Hades to bring back a poet, since Athens has lost through death Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. The characters include an overworked porter, a landlady, a maidservant, a corpse, and two choruses—one of initiated persons and the other of frogs, which is sung behind the scenes. In the underworld, after a contest for the throne of tragedy, the award is given to Æschylus. Songs and lyrics distinguish this play and indeed all the plays of Aristophanes.

Greek Prose of the Attic Age

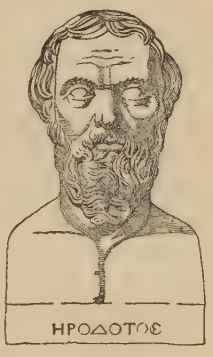
The essence of Greek culture was, as we have seen, poetic—first epic, then lyric, then dramatic. Greek prose was a later growth, an expression of the contact of the Greeks with the outside world. The chief names to be remembered as Attic prose writers are, among historians, Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon; among orators, Demosthenes; among philosophers, Plato and Aristotle. There are other distinguished names, but it is manifest that in our narrow limits they cannot be discussed.

Herodotus (*c.* 484–*c.* 425 B.C.). "The father of history," as Herodotus has been affectionately called, was born in Asia Minor, and until he was thirty-five years of age was a subject of Persia. At the height of the Age of Pericles he made his home in Athens. He became an intimate of Sophocles. He was essentially a student. He was also a great traveler, for in his early days he is reputed to have covered no less than seventeen hundred miles, journeying as far as Susa and Babylon, to the northern limits of Thrace, to Gaza in Palestine, to Egypt and the First Cataract of the Nile. He was a close observer, and he recorded accurately the things of which he had personal knowledge, though displaying credulity and carelessness in more remote matters. While not a historian in the modern sense,—since his thought is loose, his insight into cause and effect poor, and his interest in political institutions slight,—yet he is always picturesque and entertaining, his descriptions are vivid, his anecdotes are apt, and natural and social features take an interesting place in his narrative. There are nine books in his history. The first six are introductory, giving the early history of Greece and Persia, with many subsidiary details in world history; the last three describe the Persian war against Greece. His general theme is thus the struggle between Greece and Asia. There is a certain epic grandeur or unity in his work: he looks upon the failure of Persia as a sort of divine judgment—"The god loves to cut down all towering things."

Open the history of Herodotus at any point. The reader is impressed with the interest and raciness of the style. Myth and legend

find their place by the side of history. Hundreds of anecdotes crowd upon one. Note, for example, the story of Cypselus, as given in Book V. The oracle at Delphi had proclaimed that Labda the wife of Eetion would give birth to a son who should become tyrant of Corinth. After the child was born ten men were sent to Eetion's house with orders to make way with the infant.

"When they arrived at Petra, and entered the court of Eetion, they asked for the child; but Labda, knowing nothing of the purpose for which they had come, and supposing that they asked for it out of affection for the father, brought the child, and put it into the hands of one of them. Now, it had been determined by them on the way that whichever of them should first receive the child should dash it on the ground. When, however, Labda brought and gave it to one of them, the child, by a divine providence, smiled on the man who received it; and when he perceived this, a feeling of pity restrained him from killing it; and, moved by compassion, he gave it to the second, and he to the third; thus the infant, being handed from one to another, passed through the hands of all the ten, and not one of them was willing to destroy it. Having therefore delivered the child again to its mother, and gone out, they stood at the door, and attacked each other with mutual recriminations."[1]



HERODOTUS

The result was that the child was hidden in a corn bin and lived to be ruler of Corinth.

Thucydides (*c.* 471–*c.* 400 B.C.). The great work of Thucydides was his "History of the Peloponnesian War." He described it as an eyewitness. Indeed, he was a participant, for in 424 B. C. he was in command of a fleet of Athenian ships which met with disaster at the hands of the Spartans. As a consequence he lived in exile for twenty years. The "History" of Thucydides is in eight books, the last of which breaks off abruptly in the middle of a chapter describing the events of the year 411. As a historian he is a great distance removed from Herodotus. He is more logical and intellectual

[1] Translation by Henry Cary.

and more of a thinker; he is less interested in divine than he is in human agencies in history. Thucydides selected the Peloponnesian War as his theme, since he deemed it the greatest event that had affected all Greece, and since he could write as a contemporary. As the first scientific historian, he seeks the essential causes of events; he writes with perfect dispassionateness. Oratory appeals to him; hence his history introduces many set speeches delivered by historical personages. Of the numerous vivid passages the best known, perhaps, are Pericles' funeral oration and the descriptions of the plague at Athens in 430 B. C. and of the ill-fated expedition against Sicily in 413.

Xenophon (*c.* 430–*c.* 357 B. C.). The third of the leading Greek historians was a man of practical bent and of active life. In his youth he knew Socrates, and in due time wrote the "Memorabilia," a work in defense of the great master. In the year 401 he joined an expedition of Greeks into the interior of Persia. It was led by Cyrus the Younger against his brother the Persian king. Xenophon describes in the "Anabasis" the experiences of the Greeks in company with Cyrus, and their retreat, after Cyrus's death, one thousand miles to the Black Sea. It is the best of the works of Xenophon, a splendid example of a story told in a clear and fascinating manner. Xenophon, on his return from Asia, continued his military career. Embittered against Athens, he fought on the side of Sparta. In his "Hellenica" he presented a history of Greece from 411 to 362 B. C., supplementing the history of Thucydides. The work does not, however, have the philosophical grasp or the impartiality displayed by his predecessor. Xenophon is reputed to have closed his life at Corinth. Of his various other writings none have the importance of those already named.

Greek oratory. In the matter of oratory the Greeks exhibited the same artistic impulse as in other fields of literature. Greek audiences listened critically to a speech of Lysias, Æschines, Pericles, Isocrates, or Demosthenes and appraised it as they would a tragedy of Sophocles. Professor Jebb points out two chief influences in the development of spoken Attic prose style—that of the Sophists, the teachers of learning or wisdom, and that of the Sicilian rhetoric,

the product of the quick and bright Sicilian people. Oratory is an art, and in Greece it advanced steadily until it reached its perfection under Demosthenes.

Demosthenes (*c.* 384–322 B.C.). Demosthenes was both orator and statesman. His early struggles, his determination to succeed, his increase in power, and his final mastery make an interesting chapter in human history. The Greek language was a perfect instrument for the expression of his ideas. The orations of Demosthenes show vigor, variety, persuasiveness, and native eloquence. Of his various speeches that have come down to us, the "Philippics," or the nine orations against Philip, and his speech "On the Crown" are the most important. The Macedonian menace loomed before Demosthenes. All the power he possessed was exerted to persuade Athens of her danger and to rouse her to action, lest the barbarian world should undermine her greatness. It was a losing battle; and Demosthenes himself, it will be recalled, took poison to avoid capture by the Macedonians. Symonds writes of Demosthenes: "His orations remain as the monuments of a valiant but ineffectual resistance. The old intelligence of Athens shines, nay, fulminates, in these tremendous periods; but it is no longer intelligence combined with power. The sceptre of empire has passed from the hands of the Athenians."

Plato (*c.* 429–347 B.C.). The Dialogues of Plato—the chief philosophic writer of the Greeks, the disciple of Socrates, and the instructor of Aristotle—fill five bulky volumes in Jowett's English translation. Their field is philosophic prose rather than pure literature, but their style is remarkable for its clarity and beauty and frequently for its poetic and dramatic power. Plato was only thirty years of age when Socrates was put to death; they had known each other for ten years. The Greeks were the first people of antiquity to separate philosophy from theology. Socrates sought virtue for its own sake and set forth the principles of the ethical life. He seems to us to be in many respects the most interesting figure among the Greeks. It is a stain upon the Greek name that this man, despite his ennobling ideas and great rectitude of life, should have been condemned to death on a charge of impiety and the corruption of

youth. Plato gives us as faithful a picture of the man as Boswell was later to present of the English Johnson. He makes Socrates the leading character in his Dialogues. The dialogue as a form of literature has remained practically unchanged from Plato's day to our own. It may be termed a little drama, taking place in one scene and without theatrical machinery. La Fontaine praised the qualities of Plato's Dialogues—their vivacity, fidelity of tone, and accuracy in the opposition of opinions. Thirty-five dialogues are attributed to Plato; of these twenty-one are probably genuine. Plato sought to discover and to master a world that could not be touched and seen—a world of *ideas*. The search for virtue, the good, wisdom, the essence of love, the ideal State, God as the author of good,—such topics are the recurring themes of the Dialogues. There are careful analyses of the conceptions of friendship, temperance, courage, knowledge. The meaning of certain Greek myths is beautifully unfolded. Among Plato's best-known Dialogues are included "Protagoras," "Phædrus," "Gorgias," "The Republic," "The Symposium," "The Apology of Socrates," "Crito," and "Phædo." "The Republic," unquestionably a great work, is "an attempt," as Grote says, "towards anticipating the work of future generations." Plato tried to conceive of a form of society where the ideal man might live. Considerations of justice in the case of the State and in the individual; the education and qualifications of rulers; the dangers of the life of tyranny,—these and other matters receive careful attention in this first study of the ideal commonwealth. The "Apology," "Crito," and "Phædo" should be read in succession as dealing with matters concerning the trial and death of Socrates. The closing portion of the "Phædo" is one of the most moving passages in literature. Plato says very simply as he finishes his account, "Such was the end of our friend, whom

PLATO

I may truly call the wisest, and justest, and best of all the men whom I have ever known."

There can be no question that the study of Plato adds to our stock of ideas, deepens our love for the true and the beautiful, and throws a flood of light upon the Greeks in their greatest era.

Aristotle (384–322 B.C.). "The master of those who know," the most influential of all the thinkers of Greece, was born in a small Thracian town. He was a pupil of Plato and for twenty years (from his eighteenth year on) was closely associated with him. He became the tutor of Alexander the Great. Returning to Athens in 334 B.C., he produced the series of works associated with his name and also taught publicly in the Lyceum. One hundred years after his death a catalogue of his writings, naming one hundred and forty-six works, was prepared at Alexandria, but few of these have come down to us. The writings of Aristotle that we do possess were preserved by a series of fortunate incidents, and seem to be the greatest that came from his pen. Aristotle absorbed the learning of his race and worked it over into a unified system. Until the development of modern scientific ideas—in other words, for eighteen hundred years—Aristotle's ideas were the basis for scientific and scholastic thought. It is hard to calculate what his influence has been through the ages. His works were literally *the textbooks* of the Middle Ages. Philosophy, logic, ethics, politics, and the science of life were all expounded in his writings. To the student of literature Aristotle's "Poetics" is the most interesting of his writings. His discussion of the epic and of tragedy in this work is justly famous. Aristotle analyzes very carefully the kinds of the epic, the attitude of the poet toward his story, the relative worth of epic and tragic

ARISTOTLE

poetry, and other matters which seem of great interest and value even in our own day.

The creative epoch of the Greeks reached its close in Aristotle's day; it was his work to assemble the ideas of his race and to make personal contributions of extraordinary value.

Later Greek Literature

We have now reached the decadent period of the literature of the Greeks, but we must not fall into the error of underrating the later product. It was still remarkably rich and varied. With Alexander's death and the division of his empire into three sections—Asia, Egypt, and Macedonia—the Greek civilization was widely distributed. For centuries it dominated the thought of the world. Hellenism came to mean the civilization (subsequent to the death of Alexander) which was based upon the Greek. Alexandria, in northern Egypt, became the great new center for Hellenistic literary activity; its library, according to tradition, contained seven hundred thousand manuscripts. Pergamum and Rhodes were also important Hellenistic centers. Greece itself and the Greek possessions were taken over politically by the Romans during the second and first centuries before Christ, but the language and culture of the Greeks prevailed. The language has never ceased to be written, even to the present day. Most literary forms, it should be remembered, originated with the Greeks.

Prose writers. Among the great number of prose authors who continued to maintain the Greek traditions a few may be mentioned briefly. Polybius (204–132 B.C.), a native of Arcadia, had an active and honorable career as a soldier and statesman. Out of his observation of and participation in Greek and Roman wars he produced a history of his own times which shows him a good successor to Herodotus and Thucydides. Forty books made up his history, but, except for five which we have complete, only fragments remain. Polybius believed in a destiny controlling the affairs of men, and he endeavored to explain that it was no accident that "all the known regions of the civilized world had fallen under the sway of Rome."

This is the underlying purpose of his work. He was impartial, critical, and painstaking, and his contribution to the history of the era in which he lived has always been considered important.

Plutarch (A.D. 46–120) wrote in Greek, but he seems to be associated in our minds with Latin literature rather than with Greek. He was a thoroughgoing Greek, born in Bœotia and educated in Athens. His knowledge of Latin was far from complete, but his interest in Roman affairs was keen, and he was a trained thinker and writer. His works were varied. Sixty or more treatises, designated as "morals," dealt with subjects historical, ethical, and literary, and are of special interest because of their quotations from Greek classics now lost. Plutarch's "Lives of Famous Men" have made his name a household word. The lives are in pairs, twenty-three Greek and twenty-three Roman—a somewhat artificial plan. He shows more skill and accurate knowledge in his presentation of the lives of Greeks. His erudition, diligence, and other qualities entitle him to be considered one of the chief writers of the ancient world. If Herodotus was the father of history, Plutarch was the father of biography. English-speaking peoples have known him for centuries. North's vigorous and delightful translation was used by Shakespeare as the foundation of his Roman historical plays.

Epictetus was born in Phrygia about A.D. 60. He was deformed and a slave, but in due time he secured his freedom. He had a logical mind and was a natural teacher. While he wrote nothing himself, his pupil Arrianus has left us in the "Discourses of Epictetus" a picture of his master's philosophy and ideas. Three centuries earlier another Greek, Epicurus, had formulated a philosophy which we denominate as Epicureanism—a philosophy which regards pleasure as the end of human action and as the most important thing in life, since ultimate pleasure means freedom. Epictetus, on the other hand, was one of the exponents of Stoicism. His convictions were set forth with the greatest candor and lucidity. Everything in life, he conceived, may be divided into two classes—those things that are within our control and those that are not. The inward life is the important matter, since we can regulate it with the help of God; external events are of less consequence. "If you always remember

that God stands by as a witness of whatever you do, either in soul or body, you will never err, either in your prayers or actions, and you will have God abiding with you."

Lucian (A.D. 120–180) was born in a town in northern Syria. He was a prose Aristophanes, witty, satirical, an unsparing critic. His knowledge of Greek was profound; he wrote in the purest Attic style. A large number of his genuine writings have come down to us. His ordinary form is the dialogue. An analysis of his pieces reveals a genuine humorist, a frank unbeliever in the gods and in the systems of philosophy. Since the days of the Renaissance Lucian has been widely read. Raphael and Dürer have illustrated him. Walter Pater has helped to make him known to English readers.

A century after Lucian's day lived the celebrated critic Longinus, reputed to be the author of the essay "The Sublime," a famous critical document.

Late poetry. There are two books of extraordinary beauty and charm which should be widely known by those who love the good things of literature—"Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus rendered into English prose," by Andrew Lang, and Mackail's "Select Epigrams from the Greek Anthology."

The idyl, as represented by Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus, is a little picture, whether concerned with country or city life, with legends, or with personal experience. Theocritus was a Syracusan who lived in the third century B.C. His later life was spent in Alexandria, but he never forgot the soft air, the blue sky, or the rustic beauty of southern Sicily, and his pastoral poetry has all the freshness of the earlier day. The dialogues of rural swains discoursing of their loves must have seemed as remote to the court of the Ptolemies as they do to us. Yet the poetic ardor of Theocritus had found a fitting form of expression. "Sweet, meseems, is the whispering of yonder pine tree, goatherd, that murmureth by the wells of water; and sweet are thy pipings"—this is the enchanting beginning of the first idyl. We are lured on insensibly to share in the fortunes of the rustic lovers. Daphnis sings, "Sweet is the voice of the heifer, sweet her breath, sweet to lie beneath the sky in summer, by running water," and we are fain to partake of his simple joys.

Of Bion we know little except that his birthplace was at Smyrna. His "Lament for Adonis" is a beautiful poem, upon which the English poet Shelley modeled his "Adonais." The finest of the idyls of Moschus is his lament for Bion. How exquisite this passage:

"Ah me, when the mallows wither in the garden, and the green parsley, and the curled tendrils of the anise, on a later day they live again, and spring in another year; but we men, we, the great and mighty, or wise, when once we have died, in hollow earth we sleep, gone down into silence; a right long, and endless, and unawakening sleep."

The Greek Anthology consists of four thousand selections made at Constantinople, partly in the tenth and partly in the fourteenth century. Mackail has translated five hundred of these. The earliest of the poems, as he points out, "date from 700 B.C., and they extend from that time almost continuously down to A.D. 1000. Throughout all that period they present little or no change in language or versification. A form of poetry which remained alive for seventeen centuries is unique in literary history, and bears striking testimony to the extraordinary vitality of the Greek genius."

Here is an epitaph from Callimachus:

"What stranger, O shipwrecked man? Leontichus found me here a corpse on the shore, and heaped this tomb over me, with tears for his own calamitous life: for neither is he at peace, but flits like a gull over the sea."

And a graceful poem on a wayside god, written by an unknown author:

"Go and rest your limbs here for a little under the juniper, O wayfarers, by Hermes, Guardian of the Way, not in crowds, but those of you whose knees are tired with heavy toil and thirst, after traversing a long road; for there a breeze and a shady seat and the fountain under the rock will lull your toil-wearied limbs; and having so escaped the midday breath of the autumnal dogstar, pay his due honour to Hermes of the Ways."

And this on Pandora's box, by Macedonius:

"I laugh as I look on the jar of Pandora, nor do I blame the woman, but the wings of the Blessings themselves; for they flutter through the

sky over the abodes of all the earth, while they ought to have descended on the ground. But the woman behind the lid, with cheeks grown pallid, has lost the splendour of the beauties that she had, and now our life has missed both ways, because she grows old in it, and the jar is empty."

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Suggested Topics

The contributions of the Greeks to civilization.
A study of Homeric times.
Character studies from Homer.
The similes of the Iliad and Odyssey.
The travels of Ulysses.
Poets of the Greek Lyric Age.
The nature of the Greek subjects for tragedy.
The "Antigone" of Sophocles.
Euripides' "Trojan Women."
Comparison of the three great Greek tragedians.
Ancient and modern tragedy—a contrast.
Anecdotes from Herodotus.
Socrates and Jesus—a comparative study.
A dialogue from Plato.
The philosophy of Epictetus.
Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus.
The Greek Anthology.

CHAPTER V

LATIN LITERATURE

The study of the Greek language, in our modern scheme of education, has been largely set aside, but the study of Latin still prevails. The structure of Latin is generally understood, and its practical value (at least 50 per cent of our English speech is Latin in origin) is widely recognized. Italian, French, and Spanish are even more definitely allied to Latin. Any sort of liberal training must inevitably include the study of the Latin language.

When we use the term "the classics" we mean the literature of Greece and Rome. This literature in many respects is one, and the greater part is Greek. Intellectually speaking, the classics are at the very basis of our civilization. A familiarity with them in the original languages brings great enrichment to one's culture, thought, and expression. In translation they shine only by reflection, but they still illuminate.

Matters of history and language as related to literature. A glance at the map of Italy will establish the position of the Alps as the northern barrier, the location of the rivers Po, Arno, and Tiber, the site of Rome and Naples, and the position of Italy with reference to Greece. In the early historical period (1200 B.C.) this peninsula was sparsely inhabited by a primitive non-Aryan people. Then came a highly cultivated non-Aryan people, the Etruscans, who settled in the north and occupied the land from the Alps to the Tiber. South of them a vigorous Aryan group of Italian tribes established themselves. They were akin to the Celts in blood and language. Farther south, at the foot of the peninsula and in the island of Sicily, were the Greek colonies. This was the general situation as late as 600 B.C. The Italians mingled freely with the other peoples, took over their civilization, and became the dominant race of the peninsula. Rome, built on the Tiber, not far

from the sea, was the center of their political life. The Etruscans, pressed by Gauls at the north and Romans at the south, lost their separate identity by the end of the fourth century B.C., though they made an indelible impression upon the Italic tribes in the arts and in such matters as road-building and military fortifications. Within another hundred years Rome was in control as far south as Naples and beyond. Of the final conquest of all Italy, the conflict of Rome

THE ROMAN FORUM

with Carthage (264–146 B. C.), the expansion of Rome to include northern Africa and the Greek world, the astonishing conquests of Julius Cæsar in Gaul, and the position of the Roman Republic as mistress of the civilized world, it is unnecessary to speak at length. The close of the Republic and the beginning of the Empire—more particularly the Age of Augustus, the first emperor (31 B. C.–A.D. 14)—was the great period of the literature of Rome.

It will be evident from this brief sketch that the Romans were of mixed blood. Oscan, Umbrian, Sabine, Latin, Etruscan, and Greek dialects were spoken during the early period. The first Latin writ-

ers had a cosmopolitan character: Andronicus was a Greek by race, Plautus an Umbrian, Ennius came from Calabria, and Terence from Africa. It was Rome that bound all Italy together. The rise of this Latin town from its humble beginnings to its proud position as the greatest city in the world constitutes one of the phenomena of history.

Preliterary Latin was comparatively unified and was spoken by all classes. With the birth of literature the speech of the people began to differ widely, but Greek models affected considerably the speech of the literary classes, and a formal, polished language resulted. The differences tended to grow more pronounced, though the common people were influenced to some extent by the literary language and the latter took over certain plebeian forms and constructions. During the classical period a compromise was effected; the so-called *sermo cotidianus* was a speech known to all classes and was the vernacular used, for example, in Cicero's letters. At the close of the literary period literary Latin disappeared, and a fixed Latin, the *lingua Romana*, was used thereafter by all classes until the rise of the Romance languages.[1] The later type of Latin found its representatives in the Christian writers; but the several provinces were developing different languages of their own, which we now recognize as Italian, French, Spanish, etc.

In movement Latin is more dignified and heavy and less elastic than Greek. Some of the chief Latin writers, as Horace, Lucretius, Seneca, and Cicero, admitted the supremacy of Greek. Quintilian conceded that Greek had more euphony and variety, and he admitted that Latin words were harsher in sound and often less adapted to express varying shades of meaning. On the other hand, it may be alleged that Latin is distinguished by power and the practical character of its ideas, and that it has enduring qualities, as is proved by its long history and by its incorporation into other languages. The stately and sonorous Latin prose of the best period of Rome yet lives; it is a noble vehicle of expression. In Latin poetry three elements are represented, as H. W. Garrod points out—the Greek or

[1] For further particulars see D'Ooge's "Concise Latin Grammar."

æsthetic element, the primitive Italian with its fire and sensibility, and the somber element of a Rome that conquers by sheer weight both in language and ideas.

Roman character and religion. Professor Duff presents in the introduction to his admirable work on Roman literature an interesting analysis of the Roman character and religion. We follow this in very brief outline. The masculine vigor of the Roman nation was remarkable. There was a persistence of type, notwithstanding the fact that no other nation owed so much to outsiders and foreigners. Roman literature was written largely by men in touch with the highest circles of society, being the most aristocratic in flavor and authorship of all literatures. Yet it displayed a deep interest in the problems of the individual and the State. Virgil's life, for instance, was remote from that of the average man, but his work is bound up with the concerns of the Rome of his day. The Roman character in general was practical, deliberate, industrious, and unromantic. Order and system were paramount. There were rules and restrictions, commands and prohibitions; organization was at the basis of Roman life. The moral qualities—*virtus*, representing manliness; *pietas*, standing for duty to kinsfolk, country, and gods; and *gravitas*, involving the idea of soberness in bearing and mien—were emphasized. The family was the chief factor in the State, and the domestic virtues were highly esteemed. In disposition the Roman was businesslike. He was little influenced by sentiment, since sentiment was not useful. He was conservative, but if the new thing was good he accepted it. He distrusted the Greek for his versatility and the Celt for his changeability. He was not inquisitive nor desirous of novelty. Even in his literature he was apt to appear unoriginal because of his intensely practical nature. There was more prose than poetry in his literature. The Roman's desire for knowledge was limited to the kind that would prove useful; the speculative philosophy of Greece appealed only slightly to him. In language and literature, also, the influence of Greece was largely superficial.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Roman developed a strong central government and that his legal principles and their applica-

tion have powerfully influenced the world. Art and literature were subsidiary to other things. Virgil wrote (Æneid 6):

"Let others melt and mould the breathing bronze
To forms more fair,—aye! out of marble bring
Features that live; let them plead causes well;
Or trace with pointed wand the cycled heaven,
And hail the constellations as they rise;
But thou, O Roman, learn with sovereign sway
To rule the nations. Thy great art shall be
To keep the world in lasting peace, to spare
The humbled foe, and crush to earth the proud."[1]

The Roman's destiny was to be the governor of the world. His artistic genius was not that of the Greek: he built amphitheaters, aqueducts, and roads. To achieve power and greatness was a national impulse, and this involved war, the shedding of blood, and conquest. Julius Cæsar was the preëminent Roman because of his masterful spirit, his military prowess, and his organizing ability.

We find that the practical element dominated also the religious thought of the Roman. There was observance of the proper ritual, a development of the idea of atonement, a desire to determine the attitude of the gods. The Greek pantheon was taken over, but the gods now became a family conception, with twelve great gods forming the central council and a group of lesser divinities—the Lares and Penates, Vesta, and many others—holding minor responsibilities. Guardian spirits of river and spring were not artistic conceptions, as in the case of the Greeks, but were designed to guarantee abundance of water. The Roman sought to gain the favor of the god, through the proper ritual, through prayer as a bit of magic, through religious guilds and augurs. The following were the religious and national virtues glorified by the Romans: obedience; reverence for father, elders, and laws; bravery; good faith; decency; and diligence. The Roman character was deeply affected by religion, and the Capitoline Hill, the center of Rome, was the center of the Roman religion. Rome was, indeed, the religion of the Roman. It

[1] Translation by Williams.

should also be noted that the Romans were tolerant of other faiths, taking over ideas from Greece and many other lands. Pliny expressed the Roman position when he complained of the Christians not for their creed or practices but for their refusal to take part in the current sacrifices of the Romans. The Roman's objection to Christianity was political rather than religious. It is also quite probable that the visionary character of the early Christian, his altruism, and his contempt for earthly happiness could not be appreciated by the average Roman.

From Plautus to Cicero

The Greeks in the development of their literature had borrowed nothing consciously from other nations. It will be seen, however, that the Latin writers were prone to look for their inspiration to the Greeks. Andronicus, who lived in the third century before Christ, was himself of Greek race, a schoolmaster and playwright. He translated Greek plays and also the Odyssey into rude Latin. Nævius, the first Latin poet, a contemporary of Andronicus, served as a soldier in the First Punic War. He was a prolific author and had considerable influence upon Virgil and other writers. His tragedies and comedies employed Greek themes. At the close of his life he produced an epic poem on the Punic wars, famous in its day and for several generations to come. Ennius (239–169 B.C.) was also a soldier and a poet. We have only fragments of his productions, and these consist largely of quotations in the works of Cicero. He introduced the Latin hexameter. Like Nævius he wrote plays taken over from the Greek, and he essayed to produce an epic, his theme being Roman history from the time of Æneas to his own day. The latter was a general favorite until the greater epic of Virgil supplanted it.

Plautus (*c.* 254–184 B.C.) and **Terence** (*c.* 190–*c.* 159 B.C.) were the first Latin writers of real distinction whose works have survived. Their work was representative of the New Comedy, and their plays were based chiefly upon the Greek comic poet Menander, a greater artist than either of his Latin successors. The New Comedy, as dis-

tinguished from the Old Comedy of Aristophanes, took domestic or social subjects rather than political and was less boisterous in character. In turn, the comedy of Italy and France was greatly influenced by Plautus and Terence. Shakespeare's "Comedy of Errors" and "Merry Wives" had their sources in plays of Plautus. We get a livelier impression of Plautus through the "Comedy of Errors" than through any direct translation of the Latin playwright. The twenty plays of Plautus that have come down to us are all based on Greek models. The themes are generally love stories, and Greek cities, more particularly the city of Athens, furnish the scenes of the plays. Plautus was, however, a man of originality. He rendered an important service as a language-maker and doubled the capacity of the Latin language. A distinctly Roman flavor pervades his plays, and the personal opinions of the author may be clearly distinguished. There are witty dialogue and movement and color; also carelessness of construction and frequent coarseness. The "Captivi," a comedy of sentiment, and the "Trinummus," somewhat romantic in character, are the best-known of Plautus's plays.

Terence probably reached only the age of thirty, but has left us six graceful and polished plays. There are more refinement and subtlety and less action in his plays than in those of Plautus. Terence could not hold his audience, as he himself confesses in the prologue to one of his plays. The populace prefers a tight-rope exhibition which follows the play, and is fickle enough to desert the theater at the end of the first act on hearing of a gladiatorial contest elsewhere. Yet Terence found much favor in due time. Horace and Cicero delighted in him for his pure Latinity. His plays were frequently acted during the Middle Ages and in later days.

The open Roman theater during the time of Plautus and Terence was still somewhat rude and was built of wood, without regular seats. The spectators were crowded together on the slope of a hillside above the orchestra. The stage was long and narrow. There was some attempt at scenery, and a curtain was used. The characters wore Greek costumes, but masks were not customary until after the days of Terence. Men actors took all the parts. It was expected that the playwright would produce his own plays.

With the development of other types of literature the instincts of the Romans led them away from the drama, and after Terence few plays of any importance were written.

We pass now to the period of absorbing interest in the history of Rome—the first century before Christ. "It was," says Barrett Wendell, "the century of Marius and Sulla, of Mithridates, of Spartacus, of Catiline, of Pompey and of Julius Cæsar, of the conquest of Gaul, of the crossing of the Rubicon and of the battle of Pharsalia, of Brutus and Cassius, of the battle of Philippi, of Antony and Cleopatra, of the battle of Actium, and of the final concentration of Roman power under the imperial sway of Cæsar Augustus. These very names almost tell their tale; after two thousand years they are as familiar as ever."

Famous names appear also in the field of literature. Let us note first **Lucretius** (96–55 B.C.) and **Catullus** (*c.* 87–*c.* 54 B.C.), two poets whose brief lives ended during the tumultuous military years of the Republic. Few biographical facts regarding either have been preserved. The great work of Lucretius was "De Rerum Natura" ("The Nature of Things"), a didactic or philosophical poem in six books (seven thousand four hundred and fifteen hexameter lines), almost completed at the time of the poet's death. The theme is not essentially poetic, and the material is unequal and frequently argumentative. What is important to remember, however, is that Lucretius was a genuine lover of nature, a painstaking scientist who anticipated some of the discoveries of our own day, and a clear analyst of the springs of human life and action. "Lucretius," to quote Huxley's words, "has drunk deeper of the scientific spirit than any other poet of ancient or modern times except Goethe"; hence he is still an interesting figure after all these centuries. The Epicurean philosophy is at the basis of the poem of Lucretius, as is illustrated by such concepts as these: we may understand the phenomena of nature if we will; physical law is grand and irresistible; we must free our minds of religious superstition; philosophy brings content and peace of mind. Despite his skepticism Lucretius is at times haunted by the fear that the power of the gods may perhaps be unlimited.

"The Nature of Things" is the only one of a considerable number of philosophic poems of antiquity that has survived. It contains much profound truth and poetic passages of great beauty. The invocation to Venus, with which the poem opens, is famous. A single stanza of Spenser's imitation of this is here given:

"Great Venus! queen of beauty and of grace,
The joy of gods and men, that under sky
Dost fairest shine, and most adorn thy place;
That with thy smiling look dost pacify
The raging seas, and mak'st the storms to fly:
Thee, goddess, thee the winds, the clouds do fear;
And when thou spread'st thy mantle forth on high,
The waters play, and pleasant lands appear,
And heavens laugh, and all the world shows joyous cheer."

The study of Lucretius in Tennyson's fine poem bearing the poet's name should not be overlooked.

Tennyson has also sung of Catullus, whom he addresses as the "tenderest of Roman poets." The home of Catullus was at Verona, but his mature years were spent at Rome, where he mingled in all the gay life of the capital and was the friend of the celebrated men of the period. We have one hundred and sixteen of his lyric poems—bold, graceful, autobiographic, and splendidly poetic. At points they offend our modern ideas of propriety. Catullus was influenced by the great lyric poets of Greece and also by the epigrammatic and elegiac poets of the Alexandrian school. Some of his poems are addressed to "Lesbia," the celebrated Clodia, a Roman woman of his day. His passion for her may have been real, but it was hopeless.

"I hate and love—wherefore I cannot tell,
But by my tortures know the fact too well."[1]

He wrote an epic idyl on "The Marriage of Peleus and Thetis" and another long poem, a lyric entitled "Attis." His poems for occasions, his personal poems, his poems of travel, his elegies, have an

[1] Translation by Theodore Martin.

unerring touch and are self-revealing and artistic. Catullus has been frequently translated, sometimes with rare felicity, as in H. W. Garrod's translation of the poem that Catullus wrote at his brother's grave near Troy:

"Over the mighty world's highway,
City by city, sea by sea,
Brother, thy brother comes to pay
Pitiful offerings unto thee.

"I only ask to grace thy bier
With gifts that only give farewell,
To tell to ears that cannot hear
The things that it is vain to tell,

"And, idly communing with dust,
To know thy presence still decried,
And ever mourn forever lost
A soul that never should have died.

"Yet think not wholly vain today
This fashion that our fathers gave
That hither brings me, here to lay
Some gift of sorrow on thy grave.

"Take, brother, gifts a brother's tears
Bedewed with sorrow as they fell,
And 'Greeting' to the end of years
And to the end of years 'Farewell.'"

Latin prose had an important representative in the early period —the elder Cato (234–149 B.C.), a statesman and military man as well as an orator and writer. He was strongly individualistic and fought strenuously against the Greek influence in manners and literature. His writings have reached us only in fragmentary form; they covered literary criticism, history, and morals. In Cicero's time more than one hundred and fifty of Cato's speeches were still preserved. They were famous for their humor, terseness, conservatism, and sagacity.

In the age of Cicero three prose writers are of special significance: Cæsar, Sallust, and Cicero himself.

Julius Cæsar. It seems almost by accident that we think of Julius Cæsar as a man of letters, for he was primarily a soldier and statesman. Yet he held the highest social position and, like many men of his day, tried his hand at verses and other types of writing. What we possess are his military reports; and we find that Cicero's praise of Cæsar's writings was true, for they are "unadorned, straightforward, and elegant, their ornament being stript off as it were a garment." His Latin was a model of its kind—clear, terse, packed full of meaning. We have the seven books of his "Commentaries on the Gallic War," written in his winter quarters as a defense of his policy, and three books of "Commentaries on the Civil War," published after his death.

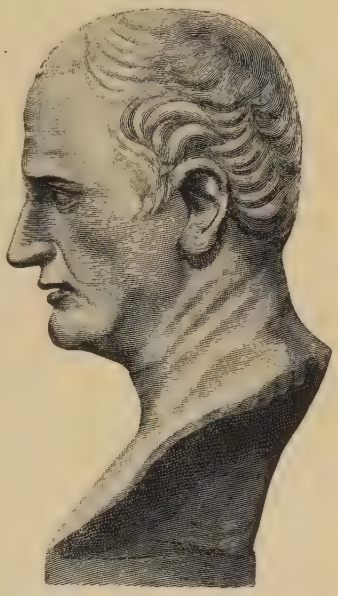
BUST SAID TO BE A PORTRAIT OF JULIUS CÆSAR

Sallust. Cæsar's life covered the years from 100 to 44 B.C., that of Sallust from 86 to 34 B.C. Cæsar was the patron of Sallust, and it was due to the munificence of Cæsar that Sallust was able to devote his later years to literary work. The history which he wrote of the years 78–67 is lost, but we possess his somewhat biased monograph on the conspiracy of Catiline, and another monograph giving a vivid account of the Jugurthine War. Professor Duff says, "He abandoned the annalistic method that culminated in Cæsar, and he raised the literary level of history."

Cicero. We turn, however, to Cicero as the preëminent prose writer of his age. His life spanned the period from 106 B.C., when he was born in the small town of Arpinum, to 43 B.C., when he was assassinated because of his opposition to Mark Antony. The mere events of his life make a profoundly interesting chapter in the history of Rome. He stands revealed to us with exceeding fullness, particularly in his letters, of which seven hundred and seventy-four

have been preserved,—letters written to a variety of people on a variety of subjects and reflecting every sort of mood from grave to gay. His broad culture had come through intensive study in Rome, through wide travel, and through close observation. He served in the army and had a checkered political career, holding from time to time administrative and consular positions. He was passionately fond of his profession of oratory. His praise of letters is famous:

"These studies are the food of youth, the charm of age, an ornament in prosperity, in adversity a refuge and solace; a delight at home, and no hindrance in public life; they are our comrades of the night, in foreign lands, among country scenes."



CICERO

By sheer genius and pains he fixed Latin prose style and Latin speech, for "before his time, Latin prose was, from a wide point of view, but one among many local ancient dialects. As it left his hands, it had become a universal language, one which had definitely superseded all others, Greek included, as the type of civilized expression."

Cicero's qualities were a curious mixture of good and bad. He had lofty aims for his country, and for himself. While he was richly endowed, there were singular checks in his nature, which limited his power. United to a fine understanding of the feelings of his hearers was an uncanny skill in denouncing his opponents with fierce invective. He was conceited to a degree and frequently prolix. Yet he was a clear and orderly thinker, and as an orator earned a place by the side of Demosthenes. Like his Greek predecessor he fashioned and developed his native speech, he held high offices in the state, he had the misfortune to de-

vote his powers to the defense of causes doomed to failure, and he died a violent death at the close of an era in his country's history. "Cicero was the first statesman belonging to the intellectual class; the first of those men of letters who have been throughout the history of our civilization either the pillars of state or the workers of revolution."

Fifty-seven of Cicero's speeches have survived, and fragments of thirty others. His writings aside from these were considerable, touching many fields of thought. The essay form, used so effectively in later ages by Montaigne, Sainte-Beuve, Bacon, Charles Lamb, Carlyle, and many others, was splendidly adapted to Cicero's themes. His two essays on friendship and on old age have always been genuine favorites. We see him at his best in these two essays —kindly, philosophic, of engaging personality, serene, the cultured gentleman.

"The short period of life is long enough for living well and honorably; and if you should advance further, you need no more grieve than farmers do when the loveliness of spring-time hath passed, that summer and autumn have come. For spring represents the time of youth, and gives promise of the future fruits; the remaining seasons are intended for plucking and gathering in those fruits. . . . The nearer I approach to death, I seem, as it were, to be getting sight of land, and at length, after a long voyage, to be just coming into harbor."[1]

The Augustan Age

At the time of Cicero's death Virgil was twenty-seven, Horace twenty-two, and Livy sixteen. But they belonged to a new world—a world of peace, which involved a different order of things. The "Augustan period" had arrived, with its patronage of the arts. The Emperor Augustus and his adviser or home minister, Mæcenas, encouraged authorship. Adulation of the emperor became the accepted thing.

Virgil. The fame of Virgil as a poet, very great in his own day, has scarcely been dimmed in the intervening centuries. His supreme vogue, however, received rude assaults at the end of the

[1] Translation by Edmonds.

eighteenth century, principally in Germany. What Homer was to the Greeks, Virgil was to the Romans. He was the lesser poet, but his work for long centuries was better known. He is the poet's poet. Dante's reverence for him is touching, and it reveals the mental and spiritual stature of both these great poets of Italy. Tennyson proclaimed his devotion when he sang:

"I salute thee, Mantovano, I that loved thee since my day began,
Wielder of the stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips of man."

Virgil was born near Mantua, in northern Italy, in the year 70 B.C. He is said to have been a close student, with a shy and retiring disposition. By a fortunate chance he became established at Rome about the age of thirty as the friend of Augustus and Mæcenas. Both of these patrons recognized his ability as a poet. Horace also became Virgil's friend, and Virgil introduced him to Mæcenas. During the latter part of his life Virgil made his home chiefly in Campania or, during the winter, in Naples. At the age of fifty-one he died. His was a singularly enviable life. He knew all Italy and Sicily and was a genuine lover of nature. He was deeply versed in Greek and Roman literature. Believing in Cæsar Augustus and in the new world situation, he sang not only of the glories of the past but of the present. His life was detached; he had few intimates; he was a scholar, a dreamer, an idealist. He wrote in retirement and produced his work slowly, laboring seven years on the "Georgics" and ten on the Æneid. He had hoped to be granted three years more on his great epic, and when he found this was not to be, rather than leave it in an incomplete state he asked that the work be destroyed. Augustus, however, set aside the request.

The "Eclogues," or "Bucolics," were the first writings of Virgil. They consisted of a series of pastoral poems (eight hundred and fifty hexameter lines) closely resembling those of Theocritus. They are unequal, but at places display brilliant promise. Macaulay preferred the "Eclogues" to the rest of Virgil's works. While they are not original in conception, yet they picture an Italian landscape, rather than the Sicilian landscape of Theocritus. Two lines in the fourth "Eclogue" have rendered it famous:

"Once more the Virgin comes and Saturn's reign;
Behold a heaven-born offspring earthward hies."[1]

Whatever the author may have had in mind himself, these lines, written within forty years of the birth of Christ, came in due time to be looked upon by Christian Europe as almost literal prophecy.

VIRGIL

It is said that Mæcenas gave Virgil the suggestion of the "Georgics." The idea must have been an attractive one, for Virgil had been brought up among rural scenes, he loved the soil, and his soul rejoiced in the beauty of the most beautiful of all lands. The "Georgics" are agricultural poems, with the Greek poems of Hesiod as their model. They comprise, in all, twenty-two hundred lines, in four books dealing respectively with agriculture, with the cultivation of trees, with animals, and with bees. Virgil displays love and enthusiasm for his subject and writes in an almost faultless poetic style. "The 'Georgics,'" said Dryden, "are more perfect in their kind than even the divine Æneids." A few lines in which Virgil praises the life of the farmer are here given, as translated by Dryden:

"Easy quiet, a secure retreat,
A harmless life that knows not how to cheat,
With home-bred plenty, the rich owner bless;
And rural pleasures crown his happiness.
Unvex'd with quarrels, undisturb'd with noise,
The country king his peaceful realm enjoys—

[1] Translation by Williams.

Cool grots, and living lakes, the flow'ry pride
Of meads, and streams that through the valley glide,
And shady groves that easy sleep invite,
And, after toilsome days, a sweet repose at night."

However, it is with the Æneid that we naturally associate the name of Virgil. This national epic was undertaken at the instance of Augustus. Virgil's theme was a noble one, for it traced the fortunes of Æneas, the reputed ancestor of the Latins, from his home in Troy to his final establishment in Italy. Virgil fashioned his poem slowly, a few lines at a time, "licking them into shape," he said, "as a she-bear does her cubs." It was, indeed, deliberate and not spontaneous poetry, and hence the work is termed a "literary epic." In this respect it is similar to the epics of Dante and Milton and unlike those of Homer. A comparison of the Æneid with the Iliad and the Odyssey is of course, inevitable; and Virgil suffers by comparison. But every work of art has its own peculiar merits. The Æneid takes its place with the great epics of the world.

The Æneid has the same meter as the Homeric epics—dactylic hexameter. It is in twelve books and contains something less than ten thousand lines, thus being shorter than either of the Homeric epics. The first six books suggest the Odyssey, for Æneas, like another Odysseus, is seen in his travels on land and sea; the last six books, with their account of battles and single combats, remind us of the Iliad. Other similarities are quite obvious, such as the interposition of the gods in human affairs; the long tale of Æneas to Dido after the fashion of Odysseus' tale to Alcinoüs; the descent to the lower world; and Æneas' duel with Turnus, reminding us so forcibly of Achilles and Hector. Virgil, however, seems much more remote from his subject than does Homer, for he tells of the past, while Homer seems to speak of the present. Virgil's gods have an unsubstantial quality. Æneas, the chief figure, is not very humanly drawn, nor is the epic closely knit together. The style is not so grandly simple as that of Homer, and the vast erudition of Virgil sometimes acts as a deterrent to the reading of the poem. Such matters as these are set forth very interestingly in Williams's introduction to his wholly admirable translation of the Æneid.

On the other hand, Williams and others have noted that the reason why Virgil treats of the past with such painstaking thoroughness is not to display his learning but to explain and illuminate the present. His use of Homeric material was inevitable, but there is an immense amount of original matter in the Æneid. "The fibre of his thought—as distinguished from the framework of his epic—is his own." Virgil shows a deep sympathy with his characters, a love of peace, an intense patriotism, and a belief in the future of his race. Part of our interest in the character of Æneas lies in his detachment of mind, his perplexity and doubt, his kingly dignity—and the personality of Virgil himself seems to be revealed in these qualities.

The Æneid should unquestionably be the literary possession of every cultured person. It abounds in great scenes and passages. The shipwreck of Æneas as described in Book 1, the powerful picture of the destruction of Troy, the pathetic story of Dido, the superb account of Æneas' visit to the dead, and the spirited description of his final triumph over Turnus, with the establishment of his race in Italy,—these have perennial interest. Books 1, 2, and 6 are perhaps the most impressive portions of the Æneid. Our account of Virgil may fittingly close with Williams's fine criticism:

"In the Sixth Book, which is the moral climax of the poem, Virgil sets forth in terms of ethics that most genuine part of a Roman's faith, the religion of the dead. It deals with the problem of the individual, and with the life after death which redresses, both for successful crime and suffering virtue, the wavering scales of earthly justice. His conception of merit is Roman, social, humane. The family, the state, the whole unfolding of Roman story, have their causes in an unseen, diviner world. . . . By such thoughts was Virgil's name endeared to the Christian Rome, that was to rise on the ruins of what the Cæsars wrought. His visions are cloudy; and nothing is clear but the seriousness of his conviction that only righteousness builds nations, and only righteous souls abide in lasting joy."

Horace (65–8 B.C.) shares with Virgil the honor of occupying the most distinguished position among Latin poets. These two were friends and contemporaries, but very different in genius and tem-

perament. Horace's birthplace was Venusia, a town of Apulia about midway between Rome and the toe of Italy. His station in life was comparatively humble, but his father had ambitions for his son and gave him the best education within his power, at Rome and Athens. As a youth he took service in the army of Brutus and shared in the defeat at Philippi. On his return to Rome, without property or position, he began his career as a poet in a modest way. A few years later he was introduced by Virgil to Mæcenas, and in due time he found his place in the recognized circle of the intimates of this distinguished man. His first writings displayed something of coarseness and bitterness of feeling, which, however, disappeared as his work matured. The gift by Mæcenas of a farm in the Sabine hills added greatly to his comfort and well-being. In one of his late satires he wrote:

HORACE

"My pray'rs with this I used to charge,—
A piece of land not very large,
Wherein there should a garden be,
A clear spring flowing ceaselessly,
And where, to crown the whole, there should
A patch be found of growing wood.
All this, and more, the gods have sent,
And I am heartily content."[1]

The self-revelation of Horace is his chief charm. He has the same pleasant egotism as Charles Lamb or Oliver Wendell Holmes. The rare flavor which we discover in "Echoes from the Sabine Farm" —the volume of very free translations of Horace's "Odes," mainly by Eugene Field—is due, no doubt, to Eugene Field's own self-consciousness and other Horatian qualities.

[1] Translation by Martin.

Horace loved his country and believed in its future with the same enthusiasm as Virgil. He had a passion for the poetry of Greece; his own hope for immortality rested in his transference to Latin of some of the meters and exquisite cadences of the Greek poets. But our love for him is based upon the personality that he displays in all his mature writings. He is urbane, delicate, humorous, playful, self-revealing. His picture of his times is so intimate that the Augustan Age cannot possibly seem remote to any reader of Horace. Thus he will always be read and admired; and the greater our knowledge of the man the greater our love for him. Horace has never been adequately translated, though no poet has been attempted so frequently. He should be read in the original. However, in such translations as those of Field or Theodore Martin it is not difficult to discover Horace's good sense, fine tastes and hopes, and personal attractiveness—in a word, his *curiosa felicitas*, his "artless art," a characterization applied to him by a later Roman. The world was kind to him; his philosophy was serene. He finished his life while the newly established Roman Empire still held its highest promise. Mæcenas and he died the same year. Thus his prophecy was fulfilled:

"Ah! if untimely fate should snatch thee hence,
Thee, of my soul a part,
Why should I linger on, with deaden'd sense,
And ever-aching heart,
A worthless fragment of a fallen shrine?
No, no! One day beholds thy death and mine!"[1]

Horace's chief title to fame as a poet rests upon his later "Satires," his "Odes," and his "Epistles." The "Epodes," which preceded the "Odes," are of inferior quality. They consist of a collection of poems—made up of hexameter couplets—modeled on the Greek. The "Odes" (or, as he himself called them, "Carmina," or "Songs") are the work of Horace's manhood. By most of his recent critics they are thought to contain the choicest of his poetry. They are in four books, and they number one hundred and three

[1] Translation by Martin.

poems in all. The "Odes" are lyric, in a great variety of meters, preserving all that was most beautful in the measures of the Greek poets of the Lyric Age.

Horace's "Satires" were at first conscious imitations of the poems of the Roman satirists that had preceded him, particularly Lucilius. The satire is a form of poetry which, as Quintilian says, is "an independent creation of Roman genius." Satire is "the expression in adequate terms of a sense of amusement or disgust excited by the ridiculous or unseemly." Now it is evident that satire may be playful and good-humored, or that it may be sarcastic, mocking, and abusive. The characteristic Horatian satire is of the former sort, while Juvenal's satire displays indignant bitterness. In later European literature, as we shall see, the eighteenth century was the great age of satire. Voltaire, Swift and Pope, Addison and Steele, were all satirists, and all owed much to the satirists of ancient Rome.

The "Satires" of Horace are eighteen in number, are grouped in two books, and are written in hexameter verse. Some are especially felicitous, as the fifth in Book 1, which tells of the journey from Rome to Brundisium by Virgil, Mæcenas, and Horace; the ninth of the same book, dealing with a bore who fastened himself upon Horace in the Forum; and the sixth of Book 2, recording Horace's love for his farm and his gratitude to Mæcenas. The "Epistles," also written in hexameter, are in two books and number twenty-two. They are devoted mainly to literary criticism. A separate letter, "On the Art of Poetry," has exerted great influence on the history of criticism. It inspired the French critic Boileau in his "Art of Poetry," and this in turn was for years the basis of French and English criticism.

> "The rules a nation, born to serve, obeys,
> And Boileau still in right of Horace sways."[1]

Let us take our last view of Horace from Dryden's superb translation of a portion of Ode 29 (in Book 3), "To Mæcenas." "I have endeavored," said Dryden, "to make it my masterpiece in English."

[1] From Pope's "Essay on Criticism."

"Happy the man—and happy he alone,—
He, who can call to-day his own;
He who, secure within, can say
'To-morrow, do thy worst, for I have lived to-day;
Be fair, or foul, or rain, or shine,
The joys I have possessed, in spite of Fate, are mine,
Not Heaven itself upon the Past has power,
But what has been, has been, and I have had my hour.'

"Fortune, that with malicious joy
Does man, her slave, oppress,
Proud of her office to destroy,
Is seldom pleased to bless;
Still various, and unconstant still,
But with an inclination to be ill,
Promotes, degrades, delights in strife,
And makes a lottery of life.
I can enjoy her while she's kind,
But when she dances in the wind,
And shakes the wings, and will not stay,
I puff the prostitute away.
The little or the much she gave is quietly resigned:
Content with poverty my soul I arm,
And virtue, tho' in rags, will keep me warm.

"What is't to me,
Who never sail in her unfaithful sea,
If storms arise, and clouds grow black,
If the mast split, and threaten wrack?
Then let the greedy merchant fear
For his ill-gotten gain;
And pray to gods that will not hear,
While the debating winds, and billows bear
His wealth into the main.
For me, secure from fortune's blows,
Secure of what I cannot lose,
In my small pinnace I can sail,
Contemning all the blustering roar:
And running with a merry gale,
With friendly stars my safety seek
Within some little winding creek,
And see the storm ashore."

A great amount of Augustan poetry has perished, and is revealed to us only by grammarians. Poets who in their own time had the reputation of a Milton or a Tennyson have now become mere names.

Livy. Two important writers of the Augustan Age remain to be recorded—Livy (59 B.C.–A.D. 17) and Ovid (43 B.C.–*c.* A.D. 18). Livy was a historian of such contemporary fame that we have the curious story of a Spaniard who came all the way from his home to the distant city of Rome to meet the great historian and, having achieved his purpose, returned at once, as if Rome had no other wonder worthy of attention. Livy was a man of enormous industry and application. His history consisted of one hundred and forty-two brilliantly written books, of which only thirty-five have survived—Books 1–10 and 21–45. The whole work, of which there remains a fairly complete summary preserved by other writers, covered the history of Rome from the time of Æneas to the year 9 B.C., the narrative being broken off only when Livy died at his home in Padua, aged seventy-five. His aim was chiefly to record the moral lessons of Rome's story, as he himself assures us in the preface to his work. He was not a critical historian, for he did not study his sources and arrive at a reasoned judgment regarding their trustworthiness; but the nearer he came to his own times the more accurate was his text. Livy was impressed with the greatness and destiny of Rome and with the conviction that history is to be narrated in order to influence conduct. Like Thucydides he introduced speeches in his work; and he proved himself, moreover, no mean orator. As a writer of forceful, effective prose he belongs to the best period of Latin literature, and is as prominent in his field as Virgil and Horace are in theirs. Indeed, some regard him as the greatest master of prose composition that ever lived.

Ovid seems to be far removed from the earlier poets of his age. His birth occurred twenty-seven years later than that of Virgil and twenty-two years later than that of Horace. Virgil reveals the idealistic and religious aspirations of the time, and Horace the good sense and clear vision of a sympathetic spectator; Ovid, however, impresses us as the fashionable man about town,—frivolous, super-

ficial, typifying a period of moral decline. Yet he wrote brilliantly and clearly, and he belonged to the poetic succession. The influence of Ovid's art and themes is seen in the Italian poets Ariosto and Tasso, in Montaigne, in Spenser and Milton, and in Shakespeare (witness "Venus and Adonis" and "Lucrece"). Most of his poetry was elegiac in form. Elegiac poetry was frequent in the literature of Greece, especially in the Alexandrian period, as we have seen. Just before the time of Ovid the Roman poets Tibullus and Propertius had done much to develop this type of poetry. It was meditative and brief, frequently mournful but dealing also with war and love. The elegiac meter consisted of an alternation of hexameter and pentameter. The most famous English elegiac poems are the "Lycidas" of Milton and the "Adonais" of Shelley.

Ovid's early poems consisted of the "Heroides," a series of imaginary letters, the "Amores," and the "Art of Love." These last two were so immoral as to shock the sense of decency of even his contemporaries. Perhaps because of their boldness, or more probably because of some scandalous misconduct[1] of the poet himself, he was banished to a town on the Black Sea, and there the remainder of his life was spent. Ovid is remembered chiefly for his "Metamorphoses," produced in exile, consisting of fifteen books written in hexameter, averaging eight hundred lines each. In these romantic tales he called to life an imaginary past. Popular knowledge of the early myths is derived largely from Ovid or through books based on Ovid, such as Hawthorne's "Wonder Book" and "Tanglewood Tales." The poems are racy and fluent and possess the superficial brilliancy of their author. As a story-teller Ovid has rarely been surpassed.

The Later Literature

With the close of the Augustan Age all the great Latin writers, with a few notable exceptions, had produced their work. A period of decadence in both the political and the literary life of Rome had set in. Augustus was succeeded by ten other Cæsars, whose fretful

[1] The implication of this, however, the poet indignantly denied.

lives all were terminated within the first century of our era. The times were not such as to encourage literature. Yet we record such names as Phædrus (the author of Latin verses giving the fables of the legendary Greek Æsop), Seneca, Lucan, the two Plinys, Quintilian the critic, Statius the poet, and three other writers of considerable prominence—Martial, Tacitus, and Juvenal.

Seneca (*c.* 4 B.C.–A.D. 65), born in Spain and an adherent of the Stoic philosophy, was a prolific writer. He was a man of checkered fortunes and inconsistent character and is chiefly remembered for his tragedies and for his moral essays and epistles on the conduct of life. Lucan (A.D. 39–65), another gifted Spaniard, was the author of "Pharsalia," an immature but at times powerful epic poem in ten books dealing with the civil war between Cæsar and Pompey. The younger Pliny (A.D. 62–113) was a man of admirable character living in evil times. His letters are justly famous, though somewhat more artificial than those of Cicero. One of these letters gives a vivid account of the destruction of Pompeii and the death of his uncle, the elder Pliny; another gives counsel to the Emperor Trajan concerning the trial of certain of his subjects who professed Christianity. Martial (A.D. 43–104), like Seneca and Lucan, was a native of Spain. He was a writer of poetic epigrams, brief, witty, and brilliant. These numbered several hundreds, in fourteen books. Some are sharp and pointed, some abusive, and still others human and tender. He lived mostly in Rome and was the intimate friend of other writers of his day.

Tacitus and **Juvenal** were the last of the undoubtedly great Roman writers. Of Tacitus the historian Von Ranke has said: "If one yields to the impression made by his works, one is carried away by it. There is no trace in him of the manner and method of Greek historiography. He is Roman through and through, and indeed the master of all who have written before or since." His life covered the period from about A.D. 55 to about 117. He appears to have known the younger Pliny; little, however, is recorded of his life. His writings include two monographs—the "Germania," presenting a study of the Germans (the chief authority in all ancient literature for our knowledge of the early Germans), and the

"Agricola," a biography of his father-in-law; also "Dialogus de Oratoribus," a treatise on oratory. It is, however, his "Histories" and "Annals" that constitute his chief title to fame. The former dealt almost with his own times; the latter covered the period following the death of Augustus. As Livy's historical method somewhat resembles that of Herodotus, so Tacitus' resembles that of Thucydides. He appeals to us as a real and powerful historian. His strength lies in his analysis, in his character studies, in his ability to coin phrases, and in his tersely imaginative style.

We are left largely to conjecture regarding the details of the life of the poet Juvenal (*c.* A.D. 60–140). He was a contemporary of Tacitus and, like Tacitus, burned with indignation against the evils of his time. The temper of the eighteenth-century satirist Jonathan Swift reminds us strongly of Juvenal. Contemporary references point to the fact that Juvenal was a trained rhetorician and that he recited his verses in public. Any man of integrity of heart living in his times would unquestionably have found much to condemn in the lives of the emperors, in the shallow culture and wicked extravagance of the Romans, and in the loss of the manliness and power of the older days. But Juvenal appears to have had rancor in his soul and to have indulged himself in a profound pessimism. That he was a powerful thinker is very evident. He is esteemed for the impersonality, sustained force, and systematic arrangement of his "Satires" and for his telling phrases and effective use of illustrations.

Juvenal has left us sixteen satires in five books, containing some four thousand lines. The best-known are the third, in Book 1, giving a picture of the Rome of his period (imitated by Samuel Johnson in his poem "London"); the sixth, in Book 2, a diatribe against the whole female sex; and the tenth, in Book 4, on "the vanity of human wishes." When we think of formal satire we think of Juvenal; in other words, Juvenal determined for all time the general character of this type of literature.

A minor work which survives from the first century possesses considerable interest—a tale written by Petronius Arbiter, an intimate friend of the Emperor Nero. It is autobiographical and gives in a sprightly and entirely unique way the adventures of a

Greek freedman in certain towns of Italy. Only fragments remain; the most entertaining of these is the portion known as "A Supper of Trimalchio."

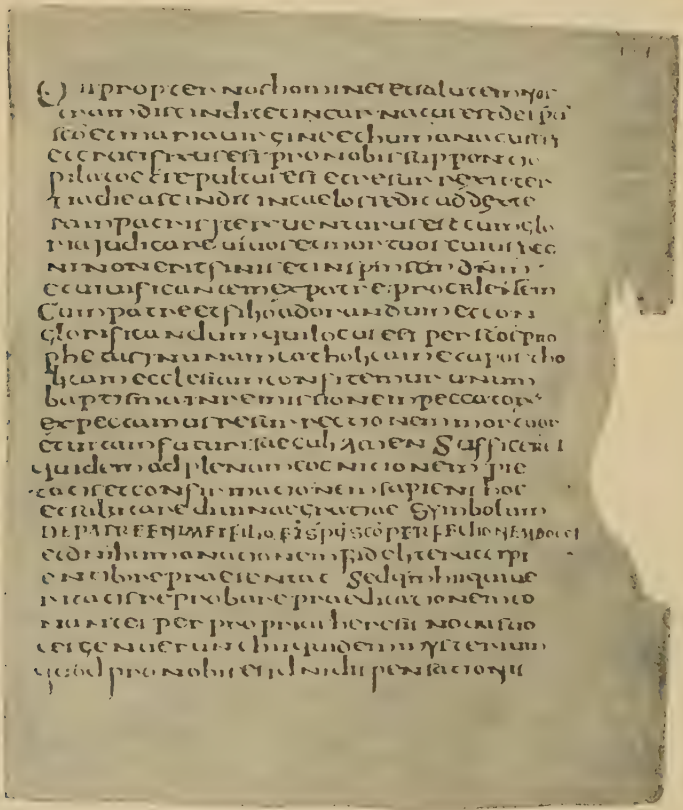
The second century yielded almost no authors of note. The historian Suetonius has left us gossipy biographies of the first twelve Cæsars. These have been well translated. We have also a few sprightly translations of "The Golden Ass," of Apuleius, which is of interest because it is one of the earliest works in the field of the novel and also because it contains the story of Cupid and Psyche. This story has been used by William Morris in his "Earthly Paradise," and also by Walter Pater in his "Marius the Epicurean," which presents a splendid picture of the times, especially of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. The slender volume of "Meditations" written in Greek by Marcus Aurelius has always been highly esteemed. It was hastily and somewhat carelessly written, but it displays the inner thoughts of a wise man, whose serenity, gentleness, and lofty spirit must have given inspiration to countless readers from his day to our own.

Minucius Felix, who was probably a contemporary of Marcus Aurelius, has left a brilliant treatise known as the "Octavius," written in classical style and diction. It is a dialogue and an apology for the Christian religion. Christian Latin poetry is presented at its best in the collected poems of Prudentius Clemens (early fifth century), the finest addition to Latin lyrical poetry since the times of Horace. They are not only technically correct but full of life, color, and brilliance.

Though the great day of Latin literature had now passed, writing in the Latin language, as Professor Wendell reminds us, continued.

"As the official language of the Roman Empire, this was used and more or less understood for centuries throughout the civilized world. Except for the prevalence of French since the reign of Louis XIV, it has never been even remotely approached as a vehicle of communication among Europeans whose native languages were different. Until something like modern times, it stayed everywhere the standard language of law, of learning, and of serious literature. The 'Divine Comedy' of Dante, written after 1300, is the first great and enduring European poem

ever composed in any modern tongue. Even in the nineteenth century any educated European could be assumed able to decipher a Latin



LATIN MANUSCRIPT OF ABOUT THE SIXTH CENTURY

letter. And to this day, as everybody knows, Latin remains the world-wide language of the ancestral Catholic Church. In one sense, therefore, it has never died."

The Latin writings of Tertullian, Athanasius, Ambrose, and other Church fathers are impressive in number and character. Jerome's Latin translation of the Bible has already been mentioned.

St. Augustine (A.D. 354–430) possessed undoubtedly one of the greatest minds in the history of human thought; he produced real literature both as regards manner and matter, and he gave us in the "Confessions" one of the supreme examples of intimate biography. A study of his writings reveals clearly the ideas of his day and, for that matter, the thought of the entire ancient world. The chief Italian writers who followed him were under great debt to St. Augustine, and the same is true of French critics and philosophers; his influence, indeed, is strongly felt to this day.

"The Consolations of Philosophy" has sometimes been termed the last work of Roman literature. This treatise had great fame in its day and throughout the Middle Ages. It was written in five books, alternately in prose and verse, and was produced in prison early in the sixth century by the Roman philosopher Boethius.

Many Latin chants and hymns have been widely circulated. Goethe makes powerful use in "Faust" of the two best-known of these—the "Mater Dolorosa" and the "Dies Iræ." Both date from the thirteenth century. Their lyric beauty and grandeur are most impressive even to those unfamiliar with Latin. Over two hundred attempts have been made to translate into English the "Dies Iræ." The poem proclaims the Day of Judgment. We give a few stanzas in the original and in the translation by John A. Dix:

"Dies irae, dies illa!
Solvet saeclum in favilla,
Teste David cum Sybilla.

. . . . . .

"Mors stupebit, et natura,
Quum resurget creatura,
Judicanti responsura.

. . . . . .

"Judex ergo cum sedebit,
Quidquid latet, apparebit:
Nil inultum remanebit.

"Day of vengeance, without morrow!
Earth shall end in flame and sorrow,
As from Saint and Seer we borrow.

. . . . . .

"Death and Nature, mazed, are quaking,
When, the grave's long slumber breaking,
Man to judgment is awaking.

. . . . . .

"Sits the Judge, the raised arraigning,
Darkest mysteries explaining,
Nothing unavenged remaining.

"Quid sum, miser! tunc dicturus,
Quem patronum rogaturus,
Quum vix justus sit securus?

"Rex tremendae majestatis,
Qui salvandos salvas gratis,
Salve me, fons pietatis!"

"What shall I then say, unfriended,
By no advocate attended,
When the just are scarce defended?

"King of majesty tremendous,
By Thy saving grace defend us,
Fount of pity, safety send us!"

Scholars who have made a close study of Latin literature have reached an interesting conclusion: that through the entire literature, notwithstanding the differences in various periods, there is a striking continuity, whether the prose of Cicero or Erasmus or the poetry of Virgil or of his late successors be brought under view.

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Suggested Topics

Relation of Latin to Greek literature.
Story of the Æneid.
Virgil's "Eclogues" compared with the "Idyls" of Theocritus.

Cicero on old age and friendship.
The use of Greek mythology by Roman writers.
The personality of Horace.
Horace's poetry.
The "Metamorphoses" of Ovid.
Scenes from Livy.
Marcus Aurelius and his philosophy of life.
The "Confessions" of St. Augustine.
Famous Latin hymns.

CHAPTER VI

ITALIAN LITERATURE

Our admiration for Italy is quickened with our knowledge. When Byron sang "O Rome! my country! city of the soul!" he was thinking perhaps of the glories of the ancient time. But it was the same Byron who knelt at the tomb of Dante in Ravenna and wept. When Browning wrote

> "Open my heart and you will see
> Graved inside of it, 'Italy,'"

the medieval city of Florence was casting its spell over him; but Browning was also giving expression to his feeling for the beauty and magic of modern Italy. Countless associations have endeared this land to men of all generations and of all races.

"Italy," says Carlyle, "has produced a far greater number of great men than any other nation, men distinguished in art, thinking, conduct." Richard Garnett names "the nine Italians most brilliantly conspicuous in the very first rank of genius and achievement—Aquinas, Dante, Columbus, Leonardo, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Titian, Galileo, Napoleon," and he points out that only one of these is, properly speaking, a man of letters. It is well to remember, therefore, that in dealing with the literature of Italy we are exploring only a single aspect of Italy's achievements.

The Italian language. The break-up of the Roman Empire left Italy a prey to the barbarian invaders. For a thousand years her political fortunes have been complex indeed. Political unity has been achieved only within the last sixty years, but unity of race, culture, and language came very much earlier. The Italian language is closer to Latin than are the other Romance languages because the cultural tradition was naturally strongest in Italy. As has been

explained in the last chapter, Latin slowly merged in the later days of Rome into the softer Italian dialects—the speech of the people, which, although it was not the language of the courts or of letters

FLORENCE IN THE DAYS OF LUCA DELLA ROBBIA

or of the Church, in due time gained the ascendancy. The earliest Italian literature was written in various dialects. The Tuscan speech that Dante used, the purest and the most closely related to Latin of the dialects of Italy, became, through Dante's marvelous

literary power and influence, the cultivated speech of all Italy. What Dante began, the great Humanist and poet Petrarch, and the first writer of classic Italian prose, Boccaccio, continued. The Italian language used by these three Tuscans continues to be the speech of Italy, and it possesses a unity greater than that of any other literary language of Europe. It is in every way the worthy successor of Latin. Dante himself voiced his admiration for it by commending "the smoothness of its syllables, the propriety of its rules, and the sweet discourses that are made of it."

The Middle Ages. How curious a thing it is to recall that the people of Italy, richly gifted as they were, clung for so many centuries to the traditions of the past and, culturally speaking, produced so little! From Boethius to Dante is a longer interval than from Dante to our own times. The Papacy and the Empire, the Church and the State, were the two important factors of the Middle Ages. The Roman Church dominated the spiritual life of the people; the Holy Roman Empire represented the temporal power. It was but a pale reflection of the empire of Augustus, and yet the medieval mind attached great significance to it. The Church frequently craved temporal as well as spiritual overlordship. With so much at stake Papacy and Empire found themselves set over against each other. In Italy the term "Guelf" came to mean the popular and democratic element, supported by the Pope, favored by the cities, opposed to an Empire controlled largely by foreigners; the term "Ghibelline" the imperialist element, aristocratic and restrictive, favored by the nobles and the Emperor. When Dante began his work, Italy was distracted politically and was in danger of entire dismemberment. Florence was torn by two rival factions of the Guelfs.

Yet the dawn of a new era might already be descried. Dante's century, the thirteenth, was destined to be famous. In addition to Dante himself, the philosopher and theologian Thomas Aquinas, Francis of Assisi, and the painter Giotto were stars of the first magnitude. The rise of the free cities of Italy meant a greater degree of popular government. Learning, though still cramped within narrow bounds, was eagerly sought after. Life became richer. Literature found lyric expression in the language of the people.

The precursors of Dante. For a generation or so before the century commenced, troubadours were familiar figures in northern Italy, and Provençal poems were common.[1] The first authentic lyric poetry in Italian consisted of love poems produced in Sicily under the encouragement of the Emperor Frederick II. Some of the choicest of these and of the love songs of Tuscany, written after the middle of the century, have been exquisitely translated by the English poet Dante Gabriel Rossetti and gathered into a volume entitled "Dante and his Circle." Guido Cavalcanti and Cino da Pistoia were the most gifted of these lyric poets and were close friends of Dante. The most common poetical forms were three: (1) the *canzone*, consisting of a poem made up of twelve-line or thirteen-line stanzas with an elaborate riming scheme; (2) the *sonnet*, a poetic form well known in English literature and borrowed by English writers from the Italian—a well-knit poem complete in fourteen lines; and (3) the *ballata*, consisting of a poem of two or more stanzas, of which the theme was set forth in the opening stanza.

Dante

Of all the poets who have trod the soil of Italy, Dante is easily the greatest: greater than his predecessor Virgil, whose name he venerated so highly; greater than his near contemporary Chaucer, who was in Italy in 1372; greater than Milton, who visited Florence three centuries after Dante's death; greater than the German poet Goethe, who, after years of hope deferred, finally reached Italy in 1786; greater than Keats or Shelley or Browning, whose names we associate with the Italy of the nineteenth century. Dante's influence was profound in his own day, and after six centuries it is still increasing. Paget Toynbee's two large volumes on "Dante in English Literature from Chaucer to Cary (1380–1844)" include quotations from almost six hundred authors who refer to Dante. The number of Dante studies since Cary's day has been legion. Americans may well be proud of their representatives among Dante scholars and of the Dante collections in this country—that of Cornell University, for example, with over seven thousand entries. As

[1] See chapter on French literature.

James Russell Lowell says, "Dante's readers turn students, his students zealots, and what was a taste becomes a religion."

Dante Alighieri was born in Florence in 1265 and made his home in that city until his exile in 1302. His youth was glorified by his overmastering love for Beatrice Portinari, whom he first met at the end of his ninth year. She was clad, as he tells us, in a dress "of a most noble color, a modest and becoming crimson, and she was girt and adorned in such wise as befitted her youthful age." After the passage of another nine years "it happened," he says, "that this admirable lady appeared to me clothed in purest white, between two gentle ladies who were of greater age." The pure, idealizing love that he bore her is recorded in that most tender and poetic of autobiographies, the "Vita Nuova" ("New Life"). It gives few incidents beyond the salutations and gracious greetings that passed between them. Beatrice is really an abstract ideal of love and beauty. Dante wrote his "New Life," or "regeneration," in prose, with thirty-one verse interruptions, which are treated as deliberate studies in poetic expression. The poems are similar in form to those of his fellow poets but more intense and beautiful. As the "New Life" is fashioned under his hands, Dante gains in mastery and power. From passionate youth he moves toward thoughtful manhood.[1] At the close, writing under the shadow of Beatrice's death at the age of twenty-four, Dante tells us that he has determined to write no further of her until such time as he can "discourse more worthily concerning her. And to this end I labor all I can: as she well knoweth. Wherefore if it be His pleasure through whom is the life of all things, that my life continue with me a few years, it is my hope that I shall yet write concerning her what hath not yet before been written of any woman."

Like the other men of his day Dante had a passion for knowledge. The learning of the schools comprised seven fundamentals: grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, arithmetic, music, geometry, and astrology. Higher education included physics, metaphysics, logic, ethics, and theology. Aristotle was the master in science and philosophy, and St. Thomas Aquinas in theology. The Ptolemaic ideas

[1] This may be seen by a reading of Rossetti's sympathetic translation.

of astronomy prevailed; and the astronomy of the age was astrology, as the chemistry was alchemy. According to their lights, however, the men of the thirteenth century were deeply learned. Dante, with his powers of concentration, his close observation of men and nature, and ultimately his wide experience with life in various parts of Italy and possibly in such distant centers as Paris and Oxford, absorbed and made use of all the wisdom of his age. His is the great medieval mind. His works display familiarity with all the Latin writers of consequence, especially Virgil, Cicero, and Boethius, and with the Greek writers at second hand. He probably knew Hebrew and Arabic to some extent. His Biblical and theological learning was profound. Well-nigh fifteen hundred names of persons in history, literature, and mythology, of geographical locations, and other references appear in the "Divine Comedy" alone.

The outward events of Dante's life may be soon told. Two years after the death of Beatrice he married Gemma Donati, a Florentine woman of good family. He had a distinguished public career, participated in a military campaign, and held a civic office. While he was on a mission to Rome, the civil dissensions in Florence came to a head. His house was pillaged, his property was confiscated, and a sentence of banishment (never repealed) was passed upon him. This was in 1302. From that time until his death in 1321 Dante lived the life of an exile. He never reëntered Florence nor saw again his wife and children. It was his fate to wander from place to place in poverty and loneliness. "Since it was the pleasure," he writes in the "Convito," "of the citizens of the most beauteous and the most famous daughter of Rome, Florence, to cast me forth from her most sweet bosom . . . , through well-nigh all the regions whereto this tongue extends, a wanderer, almost a beggar, have I paced. . . . Verily have I been a ship without sail and without rudder, drifted upon ports and straits and shores by the dry wind that grievous poverty exhales." In this rigorous school of adversity Dante's character became finely tempered and noble. Sorely tried as he was, his faith in a divine order of things and in the ultimate justice of God was triumphant. He died at the age of fifty-six in the old city of Ravenna, and there he lies buried, though the city of

his birth has vainly sought the honor of harboring the remains of her son, the greatest of the Italian race.

Carlyle's impression of the portrait of Dante, which he attributed, incorrectly, to Giotto, is ever memorable:

"To me it is a most touching face; perhaps of all faces that I know, the most so. Lonely there, painted as on vacancy, with the simple laurel wound round it; the deathless sorrow and pain, the known victory which is also deathless;—significant of the whole history of Dante! I think it is the mournfulest face that ever was painted from reality; an altogether tragic, heart-affecting face. There is in it, as foundation of it, the softness, tenderness, gentle affection as of a child; but all this is as if congealed into sharp contradiction, into abnegation, isolation, proud hopeless pain."

Dante's writings are inseparably connected with his life. The autobiographical character of the "New Life" has already been mentioned. All his writings are autobiographies. "Il Convito," or "The Banquet," begun as early as 1300, is the natural successor to the "New Life." As planned it was to contain fourteen sections, each introduced by a canzone and followed by prose comment or explanation. Love and virtue were the themes, and the interpretation was philosophical. Dante tells us that in "The Banquet" he is to serve to us the crumbs of learning he has picked up. The work was also intended to clear his name from certain imputations which had arisen because of his earlier writing. "The Banquet," like the "New Life," is in Italian. Only four sections were produced, and these were completed in 1306 or 1308. His next writing was a Latin treatise, "De Vulgari Eloquentia." In this Dante explains that the Italian language is splendidly adapted to prose and poetry alike and well suited to the worthiest subjects. He also gives a minute description of the Italian poetic forms. This treatise, begun in 1304, was never finished. "De Monarchia," also in Latin, written between 1310 and 1314, expresses Dante's political faith. He was an idealist in politics, as in love. The Empire was to him a power supreme over the earthly interests of mankind, in the same manner as the Church was supreme in the field of the spirit. He explains in "De Monarchia" that universal empire is necessary,

DANTE'S TOMB

that it was by God's will that the Romans secured their authority, and that this authority is in fact derived from God himself.

The "Divine Comedy" was the central interest of Dante's life. He fortunately lived to complete it. The Middle Ages stand revealed in this magnificent work. Dante called it a comedy because of its fortunate ending; the world has called it divine because of its spiritual theme. The journey so marvelously described by Dante was taken, as he tells us, when he had reached "the summit of the arch of life,"—namely, during his thirty-fifth year,—and an even more definite reference places its beginning on the night before Good Friday of the year 1300. The three divisions, or canticles, refer to the poet's experiences in three worlds—Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. About five days are consumed in the entire journey. Each canticle ends with the words "the stars" and each contains thirty-three divisions, or cantos, with an introductory canto preceding the poem. Thus the cantos total one hundred, which is regarded as a perfect number. The cantos are of almost uniform length—about one hundred and forty verses each. The whole is written in *terza rima*, a poetic form consisting of iambic verses generally eleven syllables long, with a fixed riming scheme: *aba*, *bcb*, *cdc*, *ded*, etc., the middle line of each three-line set riming with the first and third of the one following.[1]

Back of Dante were Homer and Virgil, both of whom had dealt with the spirit world. Odysseus travels beyond the Ocean-stream and there on a rough shore finds Hades. He does not enter, but he converses with the spirits of the dead and returns as he came. Hades itself is only vaguely described, but at the entrance four rivers and other natural features are mentioned, including Tartarus, a gloomy gulf. It is the abode of all the dead and is not, properly speaking, a place of positive suffering, but more like the Hebrew underworld, Sheol. Virgil makes Æneas enter the underworld through a huge cave near Lake Avernus and return by the ivory gate of dreams. His description is particular: a gloomy wood at the entrance, peopled by monsters; a neutral region across a stream; beyond this, Tartarus, Pluto's palace, and Elysium. There is a care-

[1] Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" is a good example of this poetic form.

ful classification of the spirits. In the neutral zone we encounter no suffering. The punishment in the region beyond is not endless, but is designed to cleanse the soul and to prepare it for Elysium.

DANTE DETAIL FROM RAPHAEL'S FRESCO "THE POETS ON MOUNT PARNASSUS"

What is Dante's conception? The earth is a sphere at the center of the entire universe. The northern hemisphere is inhabited, and the center of this is the city of Jerusalem, midway between the

river Ganges and the Pillars of Hercules. Beneath is Hell, an inverted cone with the apex at the center of the earth. Descent is made by nine narrowing circles. Lucifer, the fallen seraph, is imprisoned at the earth's center. The southern hemisphere is a waste of waters, on which rises the mountain of Purgatory, at the direct antipodes of Jerusalem. Purgatory is the second realm of the dead, where "the human spirit is purified, and becomes worthy to ascend to heaven." In the first realm descent is made to the left, and the horrors increase with the descent; in Purgatory the ledges are ascended to the right, and purification is complete when the Earthly Paradise is reached at the summit. Revolving about the earth are the heavens of the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, the Fixed Stars, and the Crystalline Heaven. Beyond is the motionless Empyrean, or Heaven of Pure Light, where dwell all the redeemed and the Eternal One, mover of the Universe.

However fantastic this general scheme may seem to our age, to Dante and his age it was real. The women of Ravenna observed the poet, we are told, as he walked their streets, and they wondered at the man who had been in Hell. Dante's intense earnestness and sincerity have impressed all his readers. He makes the unseen world real; what he felt we feel, and what he saw we see. He was both a mystic and a realist. Like the Hebrew prophet or the Christian apostle he was thoroughly conscious of eternity.

No other work of literature repays a careful study to the same extent as does the "Divine Comedy." Everything requisite is provided by any one of the many good introductions to Dante and then by a thoughtful reading, with the explanatory notes, of the Longfellow or Cary or the recent Langdon verse translation, or the eloquent prose version of Charles Eliot Norton. The narrative itself, first of all, captures the imagination. The poet finds himself in a dark wood, beset by three beasts, and is rescued by the poet Virgil, who, sent by Beatrice to conduct Dante through Hell and up the mount of Purgatory to the Celestial Paradise, becomes his willing guide. Onward they go, through the gate of Hell, across the river Styx, to the city of Dis, the lake of blood, the burning plain of Phlegethon. They see innumerable forms of punishment, and converse with each

other and with the spirits of the dead. Arrived at the center of the earth, they leave the horrors of Hell and traverse the passageway beyond Lucifer to the mount of Purgatory. Here they witness many forms of temporary punishment, while Virgil instructs Dante as to the meaning of what is displayed to their eyes. Spirits crowd upon them and rehearse their own history and prophesy of things to come. Then, as Virgil disappears, there is the vision of the glorified Beatrice. The upward ascent displays celestial happiness in various degrees. Beatrice instructs Dante in matters of religion and faith. Finally there are disclosed the highest Empyrean and the vision of God.

In the second place, the poetic imagery impresses us. The style adapts itself marvelously to the subject. It is sometimes harsh and boisterous, frequently gentle and placid. Strong, tender, musical, picturesque, as the case may be, its appropriateness of form is always evident. The hopelessness of Hell, the upward striving of the souls in Purgatory, the joy and love of Paradise, are wonderfully presented. Dante's personality is in some respects the chief interest of the poem. He is on occasion severe and satirical; he hates treachery; he condemns the weak and indifferent. He has a lofty mind and a strong, masculine spirit. If he hates evil, he loves the good. He has the tenderness and at times the simplicity of a child. He believes in humanity and takes a deep interest in man's problems. Beatrice is to him a gracious vision of all that is choicest in womanhood.

Note the extraordinary vividness of Dante's word pictures:

"I, who was gazing, saw a banner, which whirling, ran so swiftly that it seemed to me disdainful of any pause, and behind it came so long a train of folk, that I should never have believed death had undone so many."

"I found myself on the brink of the woeful valley of the abyss which collects a thunder of infinite wailings."

"We came to a place where the boatman loudly shouted to us: 'Get ye out, here is the entrance.' Upon the gates I saw more than a thousand of those rained down from heaven who angrily were saying: 'Who is this, that without death goes through the realm of the dead folk?'"

"I saw behind us a black devil come running up along the crag. Ah! how fell he was in aspect, and how bitter he seemed to me in act, with his wings open, and light upon his feet!"[1]

Dante's similes and references to nature are justly famous. He speaks of "the flowerlets, bent and closed by the chill of night"; of the impetuous wind which strikes the forest, shatters the branches, and, laden with dust, "goes superb, and makes the wild beasts and the shepherd fly"; of a troop of souls which came "looking at us, as a man is wont to look at another at evening under the new moon," sharpening their brows "toward us as the old tailor does on the needle's eye"; of man's obligation to "stand like a firm tower that never wags its top for blowing of the winds"; of the stork who "circles above her nest after she has fed her brood"; of "the daws, at the beginning of the day," which "move about together, in order to warm their cold feathers"; and of the bird which "with ardent affection awaits the sun, fixedly waiting till the dawn may break." For his figures he draws upon his observation of the falcon, the goats, the sheep, the herdsman, the cook's assistant watching the boiling broth, the sapling hissing in the fire, the fireflies in the summer twilight. Our admiration is also awakened by the many definite pictures of places and scenes in Italy.

Most remarkable of all are the pen portraitures of persons. A few words serve to fix a character for all time, as of the one "who was straightening himself up with breast and front as though he had Hell in great scorn"; of the schoolmaster Brunetto Latini, with his words of wisdom, "If thou follow thy star, thou canst not miss the glorious port"; of Paolo and Francesca, regarding whom books could be written—and have been written; of Jason, who "seems not to shed a tear for pain"; of that other, who "gazes around him, all bewildered by the great anguish that he has suffered, and, as he looks, sighs"; of Brutus—"see how he writhes and says not a word"; of Cato, whose face was adorned with "the rays of the four holy stars"; of Sordello, holding himself "lofty and disdainful"; of Cain, whose voice "seemed like lightning when it cleaves the

[1] Translations by Charles Eliot Norton.

air, saying: 'Everyone that findeth me shall slay me'"; of the active Leah, the contemplative Rachel, and the virtuous Matilda; and, finally, of the glorious lady of Dante's dreams: "Look at me well: I am, indeed, I am, indeed, Beatrice." The canvas is crowded to overflowing with persons famous in literature and in sacred and profane history, and likewise with obscure persons who have somehow come within the ken of Dante and thus have been rendered immortal.

In the third place, it is necessary for us to read the "Divine Comedy" not only for the story or for the poetic genius displayed but for the inner meaning. The poem has deep significance; it is more elaborate and more complete in execution than any other work of literature. Every circle in Hell, every ledge in Purgatory, every sphere in Paradise, has its import. The souls in Hell are in opposition to God and are suffering because of weakness (the upper circles) or depravity (the lower circles); and the depraved souls are, of course, more severely punished. In a marvelous way it is represented that the punishment is not only appropriate to the crime but actually *is* the crime. The souls in Purgatory are striving to fulfill the will of God. While their punishment may be intense, it is bringing about purification. Virgil, symbolizing wisdom or reason, can guide Dante, or mankind, a long way on his journey, but mankind must be enlightened by revealed truth (symbolized by Beatrice) before Paradise may be achieved. The life in Paradise is the life with God, and God is light, life, and truth. The wonderful conception of light used with increasing effect in the "Paradise" must impress every reader. In Paradise the souls have a position significant of the state of sanctity which they have reached, but all have their natural place in the Rose of the Empyrean.

Dante thinks of life as a continuous spiritual experience, and he strives to solve its mystery. In his own words we learn that his purpose is "to remove those living in this life from a state of woe, and to lead them into a state of joy!" Again he says, "If the work be taken allegorically its subject is Man, in so far as by merit or demerit in the exercise of free will he is exposed to the rewards or punishments of justice." As the symbol of the poem is unfolded

we discover that the soul of man, first lost and astray, finds itself, is purified, and is united with God in its degree of realizing him; or else is separated and hopeless.

The "Divine Comedy" is capable of a political explanation, an ethical explanation, and a personal explanation. The last is perhaps the most interesting to us. This great poem has been termed the epic of the soul of man, or the allegory of a human life. Man mounts from Hell to the Empyrean, from doubt and confusion to a certainty of God's loving-kindness. Thus there is always the universal note in Dante. His doctrinal ideas, or the prejudices or opinions of his age, are not of first importance. But the insight, the sincerity, and the broad humanity of Dante endear him to us. When he speaks of things of the conscience, he appeals to men of every age. Homer, Dante, and Milton summed up the experiences of the ages in which they lived. Each had commanding genius, but perhaps Ruskin's opinion is the true one: "The central man of all the world, as representing in perfect balance the imaginative, moral, and intellectual faculties, all at their highest, is Dante."

Petrarch and Boccaccio

Viewed chronologically, Dante's successors, Petrarch and Boccaccio, belonged to the same period as himself, for the former was seventeen and the latter eight years old when Dante died; but actually they represent modern times, while Dante breathes the spirit of the Middle Ages. With Petrarch humanistic enthusiasm takes the place of scholasticism and theology. The old order has definitely passed, and the Renaissance in Italy has begun. By the term "Renaissance" we mean the entire transition from medieval to modern times, involving intellectual new birth, religious reform, political changes (including the decline of feudalism), the invention of printing, and the discovery of the New World. The Revival of Learning is an important part of this movement. It signifies the rediscovery of Greek and Roman classics and art and the means of rendering them accessible to all. The Humanists were scholars who devoted their energies to the restoration of the culture of the past.

Of these Francesco Petrarca, or Petrarch, was the first and is generally esteemed as the most important.

Petrarch. The father of Petrarch was a friend of Dante and was exiled from Florence by the same decree and on the same day as Dante. Francesco was born in Arezzo, July 20, 1304. Nine years later the family moved to Avignon, in southern France on the Rhone. Here, and in his house at Vaucluse near by, Petrarch lived at intervals for a considerable portion of his life. He was a restless spirit, however, and he made his home as well in Padua, Milan, Venice, and other places, besides traveling extensively. In 1370 he settled at Arquà, and there four years later death came as he sat in his library bending over a book.

PETRARCH

Petrarch impresses us as essentially a modern man. His mind was sensitive and open to all ideas. While sincerely religious, he was not "other-worldly," for he regarded life as a precious gift. He loved nature for its own sake. Charming pictures of his home at Vaucluse abound in his letters. On his travels he reports, "Would that you could know with what delight I wander, free and alone, among the mountains, forests, and streams." In another place he writes: "Today I made the ascent of the highest mountain in this region. . . . My only motive was the wish to see what so great an elevation had to offer." His accounts of his travels in Germany and France are most entertaining. Of his studies we have very complete

information. These were confined to literature, history, and philosophy. He loved the classics and had a lively sense of their beauty. Cicero and all the Latin poets he made his own; of Greek he knew little, to his great regret, but he read the major Greek classics in translation. The spell that Aristotle had cast over men's minds meant little to him. He thought him a great man, but still a man, and one who made frequent errors. Aristotle, he said, "was so completely ignorant of true happiness that the opinions upon this matter of any pious old woman or devout fisherman, shepherd, or farmer would, if not so finespun, be more to the point than his."

The library of Petrarch was famous. He hoped that it would be in time the nucleus of a noble collection of books. But he was no mere pedant. "If you would win glory from your books," he said, "you must know them and not merely have them; must stow them away, not in your library, but in your memory."

Petrarch had a great capacity for friendship and a winning personality. Among his friends he numbered a great many Italians and other Europeans. The sadness of his later years was due largely to the fact that he had outlived so many persons whom he had held dear. The Italy of his day was in a wretched state of disruption, and Petrarch, like Dante, passionately longed for political unity for his country, with Rome as its center. Rome, in fact, had a great fascination for him. Undoubtedly the chief moment of his life came when in 1341 he received the laurel crown as a poet at the Capitol in Rome and thus became a national figure.

The writings of Petrarch were voluminous. Most of them were in Latin, for he did not seem to understand the destiny of Italian as a literary language. In Latin prose he wrote literary treatises, historical anecdotes, lives of famous men, and hundreds of letters personal and otherwise. His letters are delightfully presented in Robinson and Rolfe's "Petrarch." His Latin verse included eclogues, metrical epistles, and an epic entitled "Africa," famous in its day. After his own generation Petrarch's Latin writings had relatively slight circulation. Not so, however, his Italian verses, the "Canzoniere," written in honor of Laura. Of these there have been some four hundred editions.

Laura, Petrarch tells us, he saw first in his early manhood, April 6, 1327, in the church of Santa Clara at Avignon. Her death occurred twenty-one years later to the very day. The identity of Laura is not certain, but she is a thing of flesh and blood, not an abstraction or a personification as Dante's Beatrice came to be. Petrarch's love for her was unfeigned, and his lyrics gave genuine and passionate expression to his love. There seems to have been

PETRARCH'S HOUSE

no affection on her part for him—she was the faithful wife of another, and her coldness and indifference to Petrarch are the frequent theme of his poems.

"No poet," says Cayley, one of the translators of Petrarch's poems, "has so fully represented the whole world of love in every tone and variety of play and earnest, delight and pain, enthusiasm and self-reproach, expostulation, rebellion, submission, adoration, and friendship, or regret and religious consolations leading gradually to another sphere of hope and devotion." Nearly all the three hundred and seventy-five Italian ballads, songs, and sonnets of Petrarch have Laura as their theme. They bulk small in com-

parison to his other writings, but his lasting fame as an author is due to these matchless love lyrics. The most complete collection in English is in the Bohn Library, with an introduction by Thomas Campbell and with translations by various persons. In our narrow limits it is possible to present here only a portion of one of these lyrics as translated by Leigh Hunt:

"How well I call to mind,
When from those boughs the wind
Shook down upon her bosom flower on flower;
And there she sat, meek-eyed,
In midst of all that pride,
Sprinkled and blushing through an amorous shower.
Some to her hair paid dower,
And seem'd to dress the curls,
Queenlike, with gold and pearls;
Some, snowing, on her drapery stopped,
Some on the earth, some on the water dropp'd;
While others, fluttering from above,
Seem'd wheeling round in pomp, and saying, 'Here reigns Love.'

"How often then I said,
Inward, and fill'd with dread,
'Doubtless this creature came from Paradise!'
For at her look the while,
Her voice, and her sweet smile,
And heavenly air, truth parted from mine eyes;
So that, with long-drawn sighs,
I said, as far from men,
'How came I here, and when?'
I had forgotten; and alas!
Fancied myself in heaven, not where I was;
And from that time till this, I bear
Such love for the green bower, I cannot rest elsewhere."

Petrarch, then, is worthy of our remembrance as a great lover and poet, a patient and enthusiastic scholar, a warm-hearted friend, a man with an open mind, the first of the moderns. Singularly attractive is this passage from one of his last letters, written to Boccaccio:

"Do you not know that page from Ecclesiasticus, 'When man has finished his researches, he is but at the beginning, and when he rests, then doth he labor'? I seem to myself to have but begun; whatever you and others may think, this is my verdict. If in the meanwhile the end, which cannot be far off, should come, I would that it might find me still young."

Boccaccio. The friend and contemporary of Petrarch, Giovanni Boccaccio, was born in 1313, of a Florentine father and a French mother. His birthplace is uncertain, but his earlier years were spent in Florence, and the years from 1323 to 1341 at Naples, at the court of King Robert of Sicily, whose daughter Maria ("Fiammetta") Boccaccio passionately loved. After a brief interval at Florence he returned to Naples, where he lived from 1344 to 1346. The remaining years he spent mostly at Florence and at the small town of Certaldo, twenty miles distant, where he died in 1375, only one year after the death of Petrarch.

Boccaccio had a gentle, sincere, and impressionable nature. In his gay and easy type of mind he displayed the weakness and licentiousness of the Florentine character, but his strong qualities were no less conspicuous. There is no doubt that he was a true and ardent lover of literature, though he did not prove to be so great a scholar as Petrarch or so talented a poet as either Petrarch or Dante. His admiration for Dante was profound, and he became one of his earliest interpreters and biographers, ascribing to him the source of everything that might be thought excellent in his own work. During most of his years he was absorbed in scholarly and religious interests, a fact which may seem surprising to many.

It is as the creator of classic Italian prose and a great teller of tales that Boccaccio is chiefly remembered in our day. It should also be noted that he popularized the stories of the classics and in this and other respects was one of the leading Humanists; that he developed the heroic and the pastoral romance; and that he created in his narrative poetry the *ottava rima*, or eight-line stanza, used later so effectively by Ariosto and Tasso (and by Byron in "Don Juan"). The influence of Boccaccio on subsequent literature was significant. Chaucer drew upon his writings for his "Knight's

Tale," Shakespeare for "Troilus and Cressida," Dryden for "Palamon and Arcite," and Keats for "Isabella; or the Pot of Basil." The immortal story of the patient Griselda and the story of the three rings (used by Lessing in "Nathan the Wise") became known through Boccaccio, to say nothing of many others included in Boccaccio's chief work, the "Decameron."

BOCCACCIO

It is through the "Decameron" that Boccaccio has won his chief fame, earning the title of "the father of Italian prose." This famous work was composed between 1344 and 1350 and was published in 1353. It represents the author's finished prose style and is a great advance over his earlier prose writings. It is a collection of one hundred stories, supposed to be related on ten successive days by a company of seven ladies and three men of Florence in a temporary country retreat during the time of the plague of 1348. We have already noted a similar device in the framework of the Arabian Nights. Since Boccaccio's day a number of other collections of stories inspired by him have been produced, of which the most famous is Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales." If we turn to the "Decameron" in any one of the numerous editions in English, we are at once struck with the freshness and interest of the narrative. Boccaccio is a born story-teller. His description of the plague is unsurpassed. The grace of his style is at its best in his descriptions of the typical Italian landscape, in the accounts which he gives of rambles through the beautiful country around Florence, and in the unaffected courtesy and merriment of his characters. In fact, the framework appears to be superior to the tales, famous as these are. Boccaccio drew for his material upon the current stories of Italy, classical and

oriental tales, and French fables. He is a plagiarist in the same sense as are Chaucer and Shakespeare. In other words, he improves upon his originals and makes a prosaic tale a classic. Boccaccio's stories are frequently licentious in the extreme and have thus earned an unsavory notoriety. But many of them display ennobling and generous traits of character and sometimes reach the heights of human pathos.

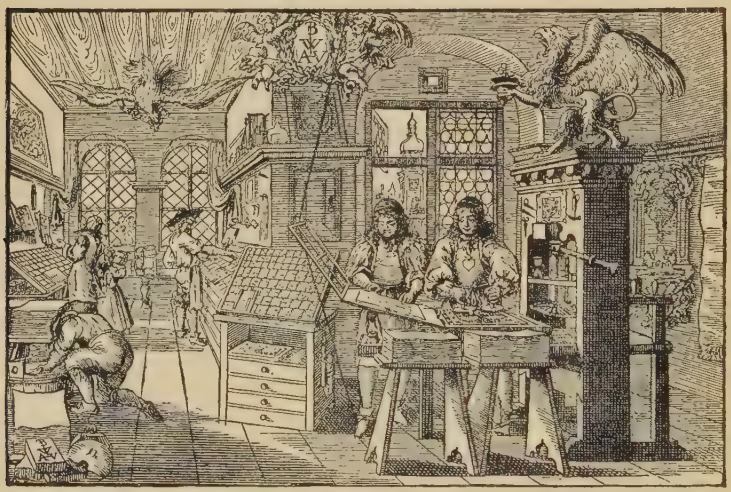
Ariosto and Tasso

The century and a half (1375–1525) succeeding the death of Petrarch and Boccaccio is the period of the development of the Italian Renaissance. In sculpture, painting, and architecture Italy set the standard for all Europe. Florence, and later Rome, became the centers of the arts. Politically the times were evil, for Italy was the battleground of Europe; first Spain and France, then the Hapsburgs and Bourbons, contended for the prize. The people of Italy as a whole had no real national feeling as yet; their land had several political divisions and acknowledged a number of rulers.

Classical scholarship advanced rapidly during the fifteenth century, but there were few important writers. Politian (1454–1494), a great Humanist, a skillful translator, and a poet of distinction, should be mentioned. Lorenzo de' Medici (1449–1492) is noted as a patron of letters and as the ruler of Florence at the height of its glory. His love lyrics were admired in their day, and some of them have been gracefully translated by Symonds and others. Michael Angelo's sonnets have a similar worth, though the preëminence of their author was, of course, in the field of the fine arts. Pietro Bembo and Vittoria Colonna, his contemporaries, were considerable figures in literature. It was a time of intellectual activity and constant production.

Ariosto. We turn to Ariosto as the conspicuous man of letters of the period. This great poet of the Renaissance was born in 1474 and died in 1533. In his early manhood he made his home at Ferrara and entered the service of the Cardinal d'Este and later of Duke Alfonso. It was a brilliant court. Comedies written by Ariosto were produced in the court theater. Goethe's similar connection

with the court at Weimar will be recalled. In the satires of Ariosto we have glimpses of the personality of their author—he appears a lover of independence and of the quiet life of the scholar. The chief work of Ariosto's life was a metrical romance entitled "Orlando Furioso," or "Mad Roland," written in forty-five cantos and with a total length exceeding the Iliad and the Odyssey combined. Ariosto had been greatly attracted to the "Orlando Innamorato" of Boiardo,



AN EARLY PRINTING-SHOP

also a court poet at Ferrara. This poem had expressed the romantic impulse of the period familiar to us in the tales of Charlemagne and of King Arthur. It told of the conflict between the Saracens and Charlemagne and of the siege of Paris by the Saracens. The poem was left unfinished at Boiardo's death. Ariosto's romance is the continuation of the theme. It is the complete expression of the times and of the poet's ideas and philosophy of life. The story covers some of the same material as the earlier work and carries it forward to the overthrow of the Saracen leader and his death.

The "Orlando Furioso" had an immense popularity in its day. Bernardo Tasso, the father of Torquato Tasso, is reported as saying

that "neither learned man nor artisan, no youth, no maid, no old man, could be satisfied with a single perusal,—passengers in the streets, sailors in their boats, and virgins in their chambers, sang for their disport the stanzas of Ariosto." The poem was not written for any serious purpose. It is a fantastic creation, and its world was fantastic even to Ariosto's contemporaries. There are several themes and a bewildering number of incidents of love, battle, and adventure. The author's purpose seems to be to entertain the reader with tales of romance and wonder and to include some of his own practical wisdom. Galileo calls the poem "divine." For thirty years the poet was busy perfecting it and bringing it into its final state. The stanzas are universally commended for their grace and beauty of style and for their harmony of words. Leigh Hunt gives an outline of the poem in his "Stories from the Italian Poets." There is also an interesting account in Kuhns's "Poets of Italy," with extracts from Rose's metrical translation.

Tasso. The last of the four great Italian poets, Torquato Tasso (1544–1595), is always recalled with a pang of sympathy because of the manifold disappointments of his life. And yet he achieved brilliantly and belongs to the immortals. His home was in Sorrento, but the family was early disunited, and the youth received his education at Rome, Padua, Venice, and Bologna. So precocious was he that before he was eighteen he produced an epic poem, "Rinaldo," which established his position as a poet. Like his predecessor Ariosto he sought the patronage of the House of Este at Ferrara. The duke and his sisters, Lucretia and Eleonora, made much of him. He had already begun his great heroic poem, and he worked on it industriously. For a brief period he laid it aside and wrote a five-act pastoral drama in blank verse, "Aminta," which was presented in Ferrara amid universal acclaim.

With the completion of "Jerusalem Delivered," Tasso's great work, his troubles began. He entered upon a period of gloom, unhappiness, and insanity which closed only with his death. The story of his love for Eleonora of Este, on which Goethe bases his drama "Torquato Tasso," is now regarded as a fiction. Tasso's nature was sensitive and affectionate. As the shadows closed upon

him, he became morbid and suspicious. No doubt he was difficult to deal with, and at Ferrara and elsewhere he became a burden to himself and to others. Yet he still wrote voluminously and displayed the old genius. At last he found a shelter at Rome under Pope Clement VIII, who was about to crown him with the poet's laurel when death snatched him away.

Tasso's writings fill forty volumes, but his fame rests upon his heroic poem "Jerusalem Delivered." He chose a striking theme—the story of the liberation of Jerusalem under Godfrey of Bouillon in the crusade of the eleventh century. Tasso thought of his task as a sacred one. Properly conceived the poem is religious, the work of an exalted soul. In Tasso's day the Turk was still active, and his conquests had extended to the walls of Venice; consequently this historical episode of the past, with the spectacular victory of the Christian host, seemed to have a timely interest. The complaint of Tasso's critics was that the poem did not conform to the rules, that the supernatural element was unorthodox, that history was violated, that there were too many romantic incidents and love passages, and that the author's work was inferior to that of the great Ariosto, whose memory was still green. The fact remains, none the less, that "Jerusalem Delivered" is the chief heroic poem of Italy. Godfrey is represented as the perfect Christian warrior. The main action centers in him and his final conquest. Another character, scarcely less conspicuous, Rinaldo, an ancestor of the House of Este, brings in another series of episodes. The third action is concerned with Tancred and with his love for Clorinda. The poem is crowded with figures; beautiful, romantic episodes add greatly to its interest. Each character is living and is finely discriminated, whether the poem deals with a pagan or a Christian hero, or with one of the women figures. The material is singularly elevated, without anything repulsive or unseemly in word or thought. In form and method Tasso followed classical models. The verse is the familiar octave and has a sweet melody and a finished quality. The English translation made by Fairfax in 1600 is still a classic. Wiffen's translation is used by Kuhns in his admirable outline of the story of the poem (see "Great Poets of Italy").

A Few Prose Writers of the Renaissance

Machiavelli (1469–1527), the leading writer of Italian prose during the Renaissance period, is remembered chiefly for his two treatises on statecraft—"The Prince" and "Discourses on the First Ten Books of Livy." He was a thorough Latin scholar, a diplomat, and a writer of history and even of poetry and comedy. The moral contradictions of the man are displayed in his writings. When we speak of "Machiavellian policy," we have in mind the worldly-wise advice: "A prince who desires to maintain himself, must learn to be not always good, but to be so or not as necessity may require. . . . For, all things considered, it will be found that some things that seem like virtue will lead you to ruin if you follow them; whilst others that apparently are vices will, if followed, result in your safety and well-being." Yet Machiavelli may be commended for his patriotism and for his republican ideas. His eminence in the field of history and politics is recognized. The tablet on his house in Florence, placed by the Italian government in 1869, calls him "the intrepid and prophetic precursor of national unity."

Vasari (1511–1574), a painter and architect, was also a biographer of artists. We are indebted to this contemporary of Michael Angelo, Raphael, and Andrea del Sarto for many authentic facts regarding a number of the most distinguished artists of Italy.

Benvenuto Cellini (1500–1571) is esteemed as a sculptor and perhaps equally as the writer of the most unreticent of autobiographies. He has given us a fascinating picture of his life and times. The man stands revealed as an artist engrossed in his work, as a libertine, a braggart, a cutthroat, and now and then as a deeply religious person. His autobiography is a notable Italian classic. The account of the casting of the Perseus and of Cellini's experiences in the Castle of St. Angelo are famous. Symonds's translation seems to possess all the interest of the original.

The century of Machiavelli and Cellini is also noteworthy for the productions of the historian Francesco Guicciardini (1483–1540), the perfect courtier Baldassare Castiglioni (1478–1529), and the versatile philosopher Giordano Bruno (1548–1600).

The Later Period

Italian literature subsequent to the time of Tasso presents few writers of importance until the middle of the eighteenth century. Economically and politically Italy was in a most unfortunate state. During most of this period the House of Hapsburg was in political control in northern and central Italy. The Bourbons remained in Naples and Sicily until Garibaldi's day (1860).

During the Renaissance, Italy had been the intellectual leader of Europe. It was now her turn to be influenced by other nations. She sought her models among the distinguished thinkers of England, France, and Germany. Only in the drama was anything of special note produced. The drama in Italy had dragged behind other forms of literature. Its early devotional form, known as *rapresentazioni sacre*, had largely disappeared in the early sixteenth century. Italian translations and imitations of classical plays became known, and in 1515 a regular tragedy, Trissino's "Sofonisba," was produced. We have seen that Ariosto, Tasso, and Machiavelli had all written plays, but these had no abiding success. Goldoni (1707–1793) and Alfieri (1749–1803) were now, however, to give a measure of distinction to the Italian drama.

Goldoni has been termed the "Italian Molière." It is true that he thought of the great French playwright as his master and that he possessed some of the same qualities that distinguished Molière. In his memoirs (written at the age of eighty) he has drawn a delightful picture of himself, though he looks back upon his career through the veil of romance, and his statements are therefore not all trustworthy. He is gentle, gay, care-free. Venice was his home and the scene of his successes as actor, producer, and playwright. In his later years he transferred his home to Paris, where he wrote plays in French and finished his life, neglected and poverty-stricken, in the stirring days of the Revolution. Goldoni wrote one hundred and sixty comedies, only a few of which have been translated into English. The plays are healthy, kindly, and good-humored; they aim simply to amuse. When Goethe was in Venice in 1786 he attended a play of Goldoni's and wrote: "I never witnessed anything

like the noisy delight the people evinced at seeing themselves and their mates presented with such truth of nature. It was one continued laugh and tumultuous shout of exultation from beginning to end."

Goldoni's contemporary, Giuseppe Parini (1729–1799), a man of pleasing personality and decided poetic gifts, produced in "Giorno" a social satire somewhat after the fashion of Alexander Pope. The poem is in four parts, depicting the useless occupations of an aristocratic young Italian, all written in pure poetry of a high order.

Alfieri, the most important tragic poet of Italy, was preceded by a long series of Italian writers of tragedy from the days of Trissino in the early sixteenth century. Apart from him, however, no Italian ranks with the leading dramatists of the world. Alfieri's home was at Asti, in Piedmont, but he was a thorough Italian. His youth, spent in a careless way in northern Italy and in France, England, and Holland, he later regarded as wasted and useless. From the age of twenty-six, however, to the end of his life he showed intense application to the vocation of literature. He lived mainly in Florence. In addition to his tragedies he wrote six comedies, as well as sonnets and odes, and an autobiography frankly conceived and deeply interesting. His nineteen tragedies were fashioned with incredible pains. For his models Alfieri drew upon Greek and French plays, and for his themes upon history and mythology. Brief, with few characters, these plays run their course unerringly, presenting deep, somber, heartbreaking tragedy, unrelieved by any special graces of style or method.[1]

Alfieri told of human wrong and oppression with a deliberate purpose in mind. He sought to revive the national spirit, to communicate to others his own ardent love of liberty and his hatred of

[1] "Alfieri seemed to be attracted towards the most horrible phases of human life and the most terrible events of history and tradition. The passions he describes are those of unnatural love, of jealousy between father and son, of fratricidal hatred, or those in which the sense of duty and love for liberty triumph over the ties of filial and parental love."—From Kuhns's "Great Poets of Italy"

tyranny. Not without significance is the fact that one of his plays was dedicated to George Washington.

Other distinguished poets of the period of Alfieri are Vincenzo Monti (1754–1828), whose masterpiece was an epic poem in four parts showing the influence of Dante; and Niccolo Ugo Foscolo (1778–1827), a patriotic and tempestuous figure in the literary life of the times, whose writings included tragedies, poems, and essays.

Before Alfieri and his fellow poets died, the nineteenth century, the century of Cavour and Garibaldi, had dawned. The steps by which the king of Sardinia became king of all Italy and unity was at last secured make a thrilling chapter in history. During the early part of the century nationalistic feeling ran high; the revolutionary movement gained steady headway. We have seen that Dante and Petrarch in their day had longed for Italian unity. Their aspirations were now fervently recalled. The treatises of Machiavelli, the plays of Alfieri, the various writings of Foscolo, gave impulse in the same direction. And the most significant literature of the nineteenth century is shot through and through with patriotic ardor.

The chief Italian novelist, **Manzoni** (1785–1873), was born at Milan. A quiet and unassuming man, he took little part in the public life of his day. So great was the influence of his writings, however, that when he died at the age of eighty-eight the tribute paid to him was nation-wide. Verdi's "Requiem" appeared the following year in memory of Manzoni. Hymns, martial lyrics, odes, and tragedies with a Shakespearean flavor are included in Manzoni's works. His ode "Il Cinque Maggio" ("The Fifth of May") is the most popular lyric in the language. But Manzoni's fame rests upon his historical novel "I Promessi Sposi" ("The Betrothed"). This has been translated into nearly every literary language. It is one in the very limited list of books of fiction included in the Eliot Five-Foot Library, and it is worthy of its place there. Manzoni's masterpiece suggests the novels of Sir Walter Scott. The scene of the story is laid in and around Milan during the years 1628–1631. The times are presented with extraordinary vividness, and picturesque descriptions of Lombardy abound. Every character is a real person: Don Abbondio, the weak and vacillating curate; Father Cristoforo, the

Capuchin friar, strong, resourceful, spiritual; Renzo, the rustic lover; Lucia, "the betrothed," beautiful, pure, pathetic; Agnese, the scheming and simple-minded mother; Don Rodrigo, proud, unscrupulous, the typical tyrant; the Unnamed, of unsavory history but capable of true nobility; Cardinal Borromeo, the idealized priest. There are unforgettable scenes: the opening description of Como, the ludicrous account of the attempted marriage of Renzo and Lucia, the night passage across the lake, the interview between cardinal and outlaw, the terrific description of the plague. A romantic turn is given through the swift changes, the dangers, the escapes, the perplexities, and the final peace and happiness. "If after reading this book," says Manzoni, "you are not conscious of having acquired some new ideas on the story of the period I have described, or about the evils that weigh on humankind, and suggestions as to means to lighten them; if whilst you were reading, you have never been moved by a feeling of reprobation for wickedness, and of reverence for piety, nobleness, humanity, and justice, the publication of this book has been useless indeed." The author's hopes were splendidly realized. "I Promessi Sposi" has had an abiding influence. It is said that it is better known than any other book of Italian literature apart from the "Divine Comedy." Manzoni's writings were completed before he reached forty—he seemed content to rest upon the laurels he had won. He may be thought of as a great writer, a restorer of the classical Italian of Tuscany, a sincere patriot who set forth clearly the evils of the Austrian rule, and the chief representative of Italy in the European literature of his period.

Giacomo Leopardi (1798–1837), the gifted, frail, and unhappy poet, also made a deep impression on the Italy of the nineteenth century. He had greater natural gifts than Manzoni, and his contributions to philosophy and to classical scholarship as well as to poetry are important; but his morbid and pessimistic temperament sadly hampered his usefulness. Leopardi's poems number forty-one, comprising love lyrics, patriotic odes, introspective studies, and poems of nature. Living the life of a wanderer, he battled against ill health and gave himself up more and more to black despair. The

following lines, taken from Howells's translation of Leopardi's poem written to himself, are characteristic:

"Rest thee forever! Oh, greatly,
Heart, hast thou palpitated. There is nothing
Worthy to move thee more, nor is earth worthy
Thy sighs. For life is only
A heap of dust. So rest thee!
Despair for the last time. To our race Fortune
Never gave any gift but death."

Yet the note of sadness in Leopardi found an echo in the Italy of his day. "Italy," he said, "sits on the ground, neglected and uncomforted, burying her head in her lap, and weeps." He became the favorite poet of the revolutionary movement. Nor have leading literary critics failed to recognize his genius. Sainte-Beuve spoke of him as the "noblest, calmest, most austere of poets"; and Matthew Arnold, as one worthy to be "named with Milton and Dante."

Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872) will always be remembered as one of the greatest of nineteenth-century Italians. During most of his life he was an exile from his country. In addition to his political writings his works include a number of literary essays. Mazzini was a student of Dante and derived from him some of his convictions regarding the political unity of Italy and the power of spiritual ideas. "He is a born king and chief and leader of men," said Swinburne when he met Mazzini in London five years before the latter's death. "He is not the least bit discouraged or disheartened —and I don't know how anyone could be who had ever seen his face. It is literally full of light; he has the largest and brightest dark eyes in the world. He is clearly the man to create a nation—to bid the bones live and rise."

Recent Writers

It is difficult to appraise the writers of our own generation. Among recent novelists Giovanni Verga has been greatly admired in Italy and elsewhere. His "House by the Medlar Tree" gives an intensely realistic picture of peasant life in Sicily. Fogazzaro has

also had considerable prominence, chiefly through the religious ideas expressed in his novels. De Amicis is esteemed for his short stories. D'Annunzio has proved a spectacular figure in public life. As novelist, poet, and dramatist he has made a bid for fame, but without brilliant success.

Our study of the literature of Italy must not omit reference to the latest conspicuous Italian poet, **Carducci** (1836–1907). He impresses us as a latter-day Humanist through his intense love and veneration for the classics. To him, indeed, the gods of ancient Greece and Rome were more vital than the Christian God. His poems are sometimes boldly pagan. "Other gods die," he sang, "but the divinities of Greece know no setting. They sleep in the trees and flowers that gave them birth, above the mountains, the rivers, and the everlasting seas." Carducci's home was in Tuscany. For forty-four years he taught in the University of Bologna. His political odes indicated his intense desire for Italian unity. Like Virgil he loved the country and the simple joys of rural life. But the chief impulse of his poetry was to glorify classicism. He was awarded in 1906 the Nobel prize. Several volumes of his poems have been published. Frank Sewall's "Poems of Giosuè Carducci" contains translations of forty-one poems. "To Satan" is the most striking of these; it is bold in conception and imagery. There are poems to Aurora, to Homer, to Virgil, to Apollo, to Dante and other poets of Italy, and also personal poems and poems of nature. Searching and beautiful is the following sonnet (Sewall's translation), which seems to sum up much of the philosophy of Carducci and also to strike a familiar modern note:

"My lonely bark beneath the seagull's screaming
Pursues her way across the stormy sea;
Around her mingle, in tumultuous glee,
The roar of waters and the lightning's gleaming.

"And memory, down whose face the tears are streaming,
Looks for the shore it can no longer see;
While hope, that struggled long and wearily
With broken oar, at last gives up its dreaming.

"Still at the helm erect my spirit stands,
Gazing at sea and sky, and bravely crying
Amid the howling winds and groaning strands:
Sail on, sail on, O crew, all fates defying,
Till at the gate of dark oblivion's lands
We see afar the white shores of the dying."

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Suggested Topics

The thirteenth century in Italy.
Life of Dante.
Story of the "Divine Comedy."
The allegory of the "Divine Comedy."
The similes and poetic imagery of the "Divine Comedy."
Dante's religious ideas.
The nether world as described by Homer, Virgil, and Dante.
Letters and sonnets of Petrarch.
Boccaccio as a teller of tales.
Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered."
Striking scenes from the autobiography of Cellini.
A study of Manzoni's "I Promessi Sposi."
Leopardi and Carducci.

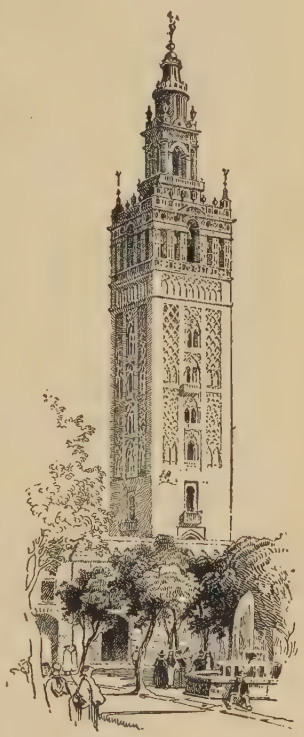
CHAPTER VII

SPANISH LITERATURE

Spain is the land of romance. We still talk familiarly of "castles in Spain" and "the royal king of Spain," terms which have little relation to exact reality; yet Spain is a real land with majestic mountains, rushing streams, a seagirt shore, and a blue heaven overhead. It is also the land of the Inquisition, the "land of the Blessed Virgin," the most Catholic of Catholic countries. It is the land of the Moors; they have departed, it is true, but the Alhambra remains and lives perennially in the pages of Washington Irving. It is the land of history—for who is so untutored as not to know of Ferdinand and Isabella, of Charles the Fifth and Philip the Second, of the Spanish Armada and the treasure ships of the Spanish Main? It is, last of all and most of all, the land of that ingenious gentleman Don Quixote and of his faithful squire Sancho Panza.

History. The Spanish peninsula occupies the southwestern portion of Europe. Including the country of Portugal it has a coast line of twenty-five hundred miles. It is shut off from France by the ridge of the Pyrenees, three hundred miles long. Thus Spain is isolated quite effectively from its neighbors, and during its entire history its people have shown marked individuality. Apart from Switzerland no European country has geographically a higher average elevation. Central Spain is the most rugged and mountainous portion. The early inhabitants were Celts and Iberians, a brave and hardy Indo-European stock. In the third century before Christ came the Carthaginians. The period of the Roman conquest followed, and by the time of Augustus Roman civilization was well established. With the downfall of Rome Spain became the prey of Goths and Vandals. In the early eighth century of the Christian Era the West Gothic kingdom gave way to the rule of the Saracen. Spain was invaded, but not submerged. Seven hundred years of constant warfare, dur-

ing which, it is said, three thousand battles were fought, ended in the final expulsion of the Moors in 1492, a year famous in the history of Spain and of America. This was the beginning of the golden period of Spanish influence and literature; but by the beginning of the eighteenth century the decline had set in. Spain has been shorn in our own day of the last of her colonies and has shrunk politically to her old boundaries within the peninsula.



MOORISH MOSQUE TOWER, OR MINARET, IN SPAIN

Language. With such a checkered history it might be supposed that the Spanish language would show an intermixture of several tongues. There are, however, few Gothic and few Moslem words. The language is almost wholly Romance; that is, based, as in the case of Italian, French, and Portuguese, upon the Latin. An unrelated Basque speech is used by the Basque tribes close to the Pyrenees; but this is a small element. Castilian, the language of the greater part of Spain as well as of Spanish America, is the literary language. Catalan, with close affinity to Spanish, spoken in Catalonia in northeastern Spain, has produced no literature of the first rank, though of late it is being employed in some works of merit. Castilian Spanish is esteemed for its stateliness and for its sonorous qualities. Longfellow speaks of "its musical terminations, the high-sounding march of its periods, the great copiousness of its vocabulary, and its richness in popular proverbs." In some particulars Castilian is as close to Latin as is the Italian of Tuscany.

National characteristics. Many entertaining books of travel in Spain have been written. John Hay's "Castilian Days," now fifty

years old, may be especially commended, and also the more recent "Heroic Spain," by Miss Eliza B. O'Reilly. The closing portion of Chapman's "History of Spain," published in 1918, gives an excellent characterization of the Spaniard of today. Speaking generally, the Spaniard has a strong emotional strain. Witness his intense fondness for discussion, his party spirit, his craving for the excitement of the bullfight and the lottery, his occasional acts of violence. He is patriotic and loves both his country and his own district or locality. He has a sense of personal pride which gives an impression of arrogance. He is not ambitious, nor businesslike, nor scientific. Yet he is logical in his thought and keenly intellectual, ready to talk freely of literature and art. He has a tender side, which is displayed in his fondness for children. Courtesy is a prominent characteristic.

His literature shows him to have a noble strain and a passionate and eager spirit. His very language, thoughts, and feelings show his romantic impulses, while the heroic chapters in his history reveal the stuff of which he is made. The land of Cervantes is a land of humor and cheerfulness. Chivalry was preëminently a Spanish product, and chivalrous traits still prevail in the Spanish character. Unquestioned obedience and faith in matters of religion are almost universal. The intellectual genius of Spain is slighter than that either of Italy or of France. Frequently she has gained much from her contact with other peoples—from the Moslems, especially during the period from the twelfth to the fourteenth century when scientific and philosophic studies among the Moors were at their height and when the Greek and oriental classics were being explored by them; from the Italians, particularly during the Renaissance period; and from the French at frequent stages in Spain's intellectual career. Yet it must not be supposed that Spain lacks originality or that her total achievement in literature is inconsiderable. She has produced in "The Cid" a true national epic. Few poets of the first rank may be named among the Spaniards, but poetry, especially romantic poetry, is of the very essence of Spanish life and temperament, and the Spanish ballad is world-famous. Among dramatists Spain can point to Lope de Vega and Calderón. The romances of

chivalry and the picaresque novel (dealing with rogues and vagabonds) are distinct Spanish types. "Don Quixote," Cervantes' masterpiece, is a world classic of the first order, the delight of each succeeding generation. And among European writers of recent times Spaniards hold a distinguished place.

It is natural that during the early period when Spain was fighting her way to freedom from the Moors the national spirit should find outlet in epic and romantic poetry. The drama had only rude beginnings. Chivalry was expressing itself not only in poems but in novels of adventure, of which "Amadís de Gaula" was the model and the precursor. With national freedom and the rapid spread of printing at the end of the fifteenth century, Spain took her place among the nations politically and intellectually. Universities were founded; Cardinal Ximenes became the patron of letters; the Castilian theater came into being. The two centuries that followed, the golden age of Spanish history, were characterized by general culture and literary productiveness. The highest point was reached under Philip IV. Spanish thought influenced Europe, Spanish professors taught in foreign universities, the themes of the Spanish plays and novels were widely copied, and Cervantes became one of the best-known of European writers. The eighteenth century witnessed a decline, and even the democratic movement that followed exerted no influence on literature. But since 1850 there has been a real awakening, particularly in the field of the novel.

"The Cid"

Taking up in greater detail the more important monuments of Spanish literature, our attention is naturally centered first upon the early epic "El Poema del Cid." It records some of the exploits of the most prominent hero of Spain, Ruy Diaz, an authentic Spaniard of Castile, who was born about A.D. 1040 at Bivar, and who finished his life at Valencia in 1099. The Cid of history lived at a time when León and Castile were first making headway against the Moors. We find him serving as commander under Sancho of Castile and under the latter's successor, Alfonso, whose daughter he married.

Banished for some rather obscure reason, he became a soldier of fortune, serving under both Moorish and Christian standards. His title of *Cid* ("Lord" or "Conqueror") was given to him by the Moors, and *Campeador* ("Champion") by the Spaniards as a token of admiration; hence *El Cid Campeador*, or "Lord Champion." His most famous exploit was the capture of the city of Valencia, which he ruled in his own right until his death a few years later—caused, it is said, by chagrin because of the defeat of one of his armies. His fair name is somewhat tarnished by some episodes in his career.

The Cid of romance is a more glorified figure. In addition to being the hero of "El Poema del Cid" he is treated in a much less worthy epic poem dealing with his youth; in two prose chronicles, the more important of which is "The General Chronicle of Alfonso the Learned"; and in a drama by Castro, "The Youth of the Cid." Corneille's French play is founded on the last named. There are some two hundred Spanish ballads having the Cid as their theme. In the Cid of romance we see the perfect Christian knight of the Spain of chivalry and of the Crusades. He is noble, generous-minded, invincible.

"El Poema del Cid," written by an unknown author some time during the latter part of the twelfth century, consists of a fragment of three thousand seven hundred and forty-four verses. The only manuscript that has survived is dated two centuries after the composition of the epic. In meter it is irregular, but it consists in general of long assonating lines divided into half lines, giving the "middle pause" effect of early English poems. By assonance we mean an imperfect rime; that is, the riming of one accented vowel with another. Thus, *duro* and *humo*, *boca* and *cosa*, are assonants. The style of "El Poema del Cid" is rugged, simple, and truly poetic, and the poem as a whole justifies its reputation as the chief medieval folk epic of Europe. We discover the Cid as a fine human figure, modest rather than vainglorious, both gentle and courageous, loyal, affectionate, and religious with a tinge of superstition. The double-dealing of which he is guilty in the poem seems to be characteristic of the age in which he lived, and as such may be condoned.

The epic opens with the banishment of the Cid from Bivar and carries him through his Moorish campaigns to the capture of Valencia. A legendary incident is introduced, of the perfidy of the Infantes, or princes, of Carrion. The opening lines of the poem as translated by Ormsby give the spirit of the original:

"With tearful eyes he turned to gaze upon the wreck behind:
His rifled coffers, bursten gates, all open to the wind:
Nor mantle left, nor robe of fur; stript bare his castle hall:
Nor hawk nor falcon in the mew, the perches empty all.
Then forth in sorrow went my Cid, and a deep sigh sighed he;
Yet with a measured voice and calm, my Cid spake loftily,—
'I thank thee God our Father, thou that dwellest upon high,
I suffer cruel wrong to-day, but of mine enemy!'
As they came riding from Bivar the crow was on the right;
By Burgos gate, upon the left, the crow was there in sight.
My Cid he shrugged his shoulders and he lifted up his head:
'Good tidings! Alvar Fañez; we are banished men!' he said.
With sixty lances in his train my Cid rode up the town,
The burghers and their dames from all the windows looking down;
And there were tears in every eye, and on each lip one word:
'A worthy vassal—would to God he served a worthy lord!'"

The following famous battle-scene passage is not only striking in itself but is very impressive when one recalls that at the time the poem was written the conflict with the Moors was still at its greatest height. Thus "El Poema del Cid" is truly a national epic.

"Then cried my Cid—'In charity, on to the rescue—ho!'
With bucklers braced before their breasts, with lances pointing low,
With stooping crests and heads bent down above the saddle-bow,
All firm of hand and high of heart they roll upon the foe.
And he that in a good hour was born, his clarion voice rings out,
And clear above the clang of arms is heard his battle shout,
'Among them, gentlemen! Strike home for the love of charity!
The Champion of Bivar is here—Ruy Diaz—I am he!'
Then bearing where Bermuez still maintains unequal fight,
Three hundred lances down they come, their pennons flickering white;
Down go three hundred Moors to earth, a man to every blow;
And when they wheel, three hundred more, as charging back they go.

It was a sight to see the lances rise and fall that day;
The shivered shields and riven mail, to see how thick they lay;
The pennons that went in snow-white come out a gory red;
The horses running riderless, the riders lying dead;
While Moors call on Mohammed, and 'St. James!' the Christians cry,
And sixty score of Moors and more in narrow compass lie."

Spanish Ballads

No treatment of Spanish literature can afford to omit the ballad, so characteristic is it and so important an element in the poetry of Spain. In oral form the ballads probably go back to the eleventh or twelfth century at least, though the first collection was not made until 1511, and the great period of the ballad belongs to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Spaniards use for the ballad the term *romancero*, or "romance." By this is generally signified a short epic narrative poem, though in later periods the same term includes also lyric poems. The common type appears in stanzas of four lines of eight syllables each, riming in the termination of the second and fourth lines. Assonance is in as good form as true rime and is more common. The chief collection was made in 1604–1614 and consisted of more than one thousand ballads. Taken as a whole, however, there have been at least twice that number gathered together from time to time—the largest and most impressive collection of poetry of the people to be found in the literature of Europe.

As to material, the Spanish ballad deals with historical events, tales of chivalry and love, ancient fable, and occasionally with Moorish subjects. The largest number is historical and is commonly devoted to heroes. Thus there are fifty or more ballads concerned with Bernardo del Carpio, and another group with the Seven Lords of Lara, while those recording the exploits of the Cid are most numerous of all. Tales of border warfare and of the conflicts with the Moors are frequently recorded. Among the romantic ballads are included such popular favorites as "Conde Alarcos Melisandra," "Lady Alda's Dream," and "The Admiral Guarinos" (mentioned in "Don Quixote"). It is probable that as a form of literature the

Spanish ballad grew out of the epic or was based on the epic. The prose chronicles, to be mentioned later, were also drawn upon for material. A prominent characteristic is the intense national spirit of the Spanish ballad. The tone is Christian, the sentiment is high, and although battles with the Moors are naturally the theme of many of the ballads, humanity and charity toward the enemy are common. By comparison the early English and Scottish ballads seem more rude and violent.

Scott, Washington Irving, and others have drawn upon the material of the more famous of these Spanish ballads. Longfellow and Ticknor have translated several of them very effectively. The English versions by Gibson and Lockhart cover a much larger number. Lockhart's collection has had wide circulation from its first appearance, in 1823. It contains thirty-one historical ballads, five Moorish, and seventeen romantic. The reader is impressed with the nobility of the race that could produce these stirring poems. Splendid traits of character are preserved. While it is of course difficult to make brief selections from narrative poems, the following stanza will serve to give the flavor of a characteristic ballad, taken from Lockhart's translation. The knight Garci Perez de Vargas discovers a force of Moors approaching:

"The Baron of Vargas turned him round, his trusty squire was near—
The helmet on his brow he bound, his gauntlet grasped the spear;
With that upon his saddle-tree he planted him right steady—
'Now come,' quoth he, 'whoe'er they be, I trow they'll find us ready.'"

Note the spirited opening of "The Avenging Childe":

"Hurrah! hurrah! avoid the way of the Avenging Childe;
His horse is swift as sands that drift—an Arab of the wild;
His gown is twisted round his arm—a ghastly cheek he wears:
And in his hand, for deadly harm, a hunting knife he bears."

One may safely conjecture that before the story is ended the knife will be used effectively.

Lockhart has translated the famous ballad of Count Arnaldos, and has succeeded in conveying the mystical atmosphere of the original. Even more attractive is Miss Ida Farnell's version in her

recently published volume "Spanish Prose and Poetry." Miss Farnell explains that the change of tense in her translation is a reproduction of the old ballad. Count Arnaldos sees on St. John's Day a gallant ship speeding landwards:

"Sails it bore of finest satin, silken cordage, goodly gear,
And the mariner who steered it sang a song as he drew near;
Sings a song that calms the billows, soothes the wind to peace profound,
Lures the fish from deepest ocean, makes them sport and swim around;
Calls the circling birds to gather on the masthead painted gay.
Thereon spake the Count Arnaldos, ye shall hear what he will say:
'Gentle mariner, I prithee, rede me now thy song, perdie.'
And the mariner gave answer, even in this wise spake he:
'Unto none I'll rede my ditty save to him that sails with me.'"

Early Spanish Prose

The Spanish chronicles, so prominent a feature of Spanish prose writing from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, succeeded the earlier legends and chronicles written in Latin by the monks. King Alfonso X founded the Spanish chronicle. This covered universal history as then understood and national history during successive epochs; also legends and other prose material. We have already noted that there were prose chronicles of the Cid.

A whole family of prose writings consisted of romances of chivalry. Such romances had been known in Normandy and France long before they appeared in Spain. In the beginning of the twelfth century, for example, the stories of Arthur and the Round Table knights were known. As a Spanish product the earliest and the most important, and the begetter of a long succession of others, was "Amadís de Gaula." It is in the latter part of the fourteenth century that we encounter this famous tale. Not originally Spanish, but the work of a Portuguese of about 1390, it first achieved distinction in the Spanish version of Montalvo, at the close of the fifteenth century. In due time there were many Spanish, French, and Italian editions. Southey has translated it into admirable English, and we are thus at liberty to read in our own tongue the three volumes of this story of chivalry. It is a work of pure imagination, not capable

of being resolved into true history at any point. Apparently it dates from early Christian times. Gaul is really Wales. Amadís is an illegitimate child, and his life is saved by mere chance. He is brought up in England and Scotland. Oriana, his love, is separated from him by enchantments and evil fortune until the tale of his adventures is nearly completed. These adventures are mostly in connection with his stepbrother Galaor (also in love with Oriana) and have as their scene ostensibly France, Germany, Turkey, and other countries, but their world is a wholly imaginary one inhabited by monsters and giants and evil knights, a land of terrors and heroic deeds of chivalry. The work is intended to exhibit knighthood at its best and purest and to emphasize all the knightly virtues. It is prolix, of course, and its details are monotonous, but its earnestness, its sustained excellence as a body of writing, and its occasional eloquence have served to keep it alive.

Three other early books of Spanish prose also claim passing reference. "El Conde Lucanor," the finest work of Spanish prose of the fourteenth century, sets forth in a series of forty-nine tales a body of moral and political philosophy. The stories were gathered from oriental sources and elsewhere. The author, Don Juan Manuel, a nephew of King Alfonso X, was one of the most celebrated men of his century, a powerful writer and a man with a remarkably full and adventurous life. He is known to have written twelve books.

"La Celestina," written about the close of the fifteenth century, probably by Fernando de Rojas, is a tragi-comedy,—a dramatic story utilizing the dialogue form and divided into twenty acts, or parts (the number differs in the several editions). It is dramatic in spirit and movement, but it may properly be classed with realistic prose, and it laid the foundation of the Spanish novel. "La Celestina" records the loves of Calisto and Melibea. The chief character, however, is a low and vulgar woman, Celestina, whose unscrupulous activities furnish the chief material of the tale. Full of life and movement, of passion and tragic death, "La Celestina" achieved tremendous success. Indeed, it has been said that no dramatic work of that period in Europe was so excellent. The extracts given in Miss Farnell's collection are well worth reading.

"Lazarillo de Tormes," which appeared a half century later (1553), is of uncertain authorship. The book is straightforward and realistic to a degree and is the very antithesis of the romance of chivalry, which as a class had lost its vogue by this time and had given way to the pastoral novel. "Lazarillo de Tormes" covers only about one hundred and twenty pages. The prologue and seven brief chapters tell of Lazarillo, the son of a miller, and of his experiences as the guide of a blind beggar; as the servant, in succession, of a priest, a gentleman, a monk, and a pardoner; as a painter of tambourines, a chaplain, a constable, and a town crier. He ends his career as the husband of a maidservant in Toledo. The book has enjoyed immense popularity and has appeared in many English editions, the latest by Mr. How, in 1917. It was the earliest of the so-called picaresque novels, or novels dealing with rogues, and it served to fix the type. The number of such tales in all European languages has been very numerous since "Lazarillo" set the pace. Le Sage's "Gil Blas," with its Spanish setting, and the novels of Fielding and Smollett and especially Defoe are good examples.

Cervantes

Miguel de Cervantes was born in the university town of Alcala, in the year 1547. He was seventeen years old when William Shakespeare was born at Stratford on Avon. These two great European writers died the same year (1616) and on almost the same day.[1] As a youth Cervantes secured employment which took him to Italy. After two years—he was then twenty-three—he rejected the opportunity of civil preferment and enlisted as a private in a Spanish regiment. It was the period of the alliance between Spain, Venice, and the Pope against the Turk. Cervantes was severely wounded in the naval battle of Lepanto, 1571, and was incapacitated for seven months. Although his left hand was permanently maimed, Cervantes joined another regiment and for three years was attached to its fortunes. He then secured his release and sailed for home,

[1] The date was apparently the same, but England was not yet using the Gregorian calendar, so there was an actual difference of several days.

only to be captured by Algerine pirates. During the five years of his captivity in Algiers he showed himself a man of great resourcefulness and nobility of character. Repeated attempts at escape resulted in failure; but his family, who out of their slender means had been striving during the entire period to ransom him, finally produced an acceptable amount, and Cervantes saw his home again in 1580. Two years later he definitely abandoned the profession of arms and devoted himself to literature. His pastoral romance "Galatea" and the twenty or thirty plays written in the next three years brought him small renown and less money. In the meantime he had married, and in 1587 or thereabouts he settled in Seville. Here we find him in the office of deputy purveyor to the Spanish Armada, a curious connection with the European affairs of those stirring days. Later he was made collector of revenues. In this capacity he suffered misfortune and for a brief period was thrown into prison, where, as we gather from his own words, he began his "Don Quixote." Subsequently his entire living was made by his pen. When the first part of "Don Quixote" appeared, in 1605, Cervantes and his family were living in a very modest two-room establishment at Valladolid. The success of the work was such that five editions were called for within a year. Although Cervantes' chief ambitions were in the field of the drama, it was natural for him to plan a second part of his famous tale; but he worked at this

MIGUEL DE CERVANTES

only in a desultory way, and perhaps never would have finished it if he had not been spurred on by the appearance of a spurious volume pretending to be a continuation of "Don Quixote." Indignant at this deception Cervantes promptly finished his authentic Second Part, and this appeared in 1615, only a short time before his death. During the last ten years of his life he and his family had lived at Madrid in humble circumstances. Facing cruel discouragements and disappointments that would have broken many a man, Cervantes possessed throughout his career an indomitable and cheerful spirit. His writings include poems, a long series of plays, and a volume of tales entitled "Novelas Exemplares" (1613). The last-named collection deals with the lives of rogues and vagabonds and hence belongs to picaresque literature. Cervantes' purpose in "Novelas Exemplares" was simply to tell a tale in an artistic and picturesque manner. The work has always been popular in Spain. Among the best of these tales are "Rinconete y Cortadillo," "La Fuerza de la Sangre," and "La Española Inglesa."

"Don Quixote" is as clearly the great book of Spain as the Iliad is of Greece, the "Divine Comedy" of Italy, or "Faust" of Germany. No person can read it without appreciating that it is a work of genius of the first rank. "It is," says Macaulay, "the best novel in the world beyond all comparison." The tall, cadaverous, dignified, impractical knight and his shrewd, good-natured, matter-of-fact, rotund squire are perhaps the best-known figures in all imaginative literature. Life must indeed be dull to those who have not made their acquaintance, for they are real creations and will give delight to the end of time.

One of the chief charms of the book, as well as its greatest weakness, is that it was apparently thought out by Cervantes as he went along, and was printed without revision. What it gains thereby in naturalness it loses in other directions, for it is inconsistent, and sometimes verbose and slovenly. It starts as an attack upon the characteristic romances of chivalry, but it soon deepens into more than that—a work imbued with a thoroughly modern spirit, a work at once national and universal, teaching by transparent example the dangers of trusting solely to blue blood and noble race and in-

EL INGENIOSO HIDALGO DON QVIXOTE DE LA MANCHA,

Compueſto por Miguel de Ceruantes Saauedra.

DIRIGIDO AL DVQVE DE BEIAR, Marques de Gibraleon, Conde de Benalcaçar, y Bañares, Vizconde de la Puebla de Alcozer, Señor de las villas de Capilla, Curiel, y Burguillos.

Año, 1605.

CON PRIVILEGIO,
EN MADRID, Por Iuan de la Cueſta.

Véndeſe en caſa de Franciſco de Robles, librero del Rey nro ſeñor.

TITLE-PAGE, FIRST EDITION OF "DON QUIXOTE"

herited prejudice. The character of Don Quixote also advances in the author's estimation and in ours. His madness is in one direction only. He is gentle, courteous, cultivated, full of enthusiasm; in due time he makes us think more than he makes us laugh. Sancho Panza appears at first as a commonplace rustic, ignorant and simple-minded; but he soon takes his rightful place as the direct antithesis of his master and the unsparing though unconscious revealer of the knight's glorious inconsistencies and unrealities. Sancho's cleverness increases with the progress of the story, his practical wisdom develops, he becomes more loquacious and sententious, a more superb liar. He has become a citizen of the world. There is also an improvement in the style and material of the work. The romantic stories, which Cervantes introduced at first as a concession to the supposed wishes of his readers, no longer find a place. The language is simpler, there is more clever dialogue, and a greater sense of freedom and power of invention.

The story is so universally known that a very slight outline will suffice. Don Quixote, a romantic gentleman of La Mancha, the most barren and unromantic tract of Spain, becomes crazed by reading tales of chivalry, dons an old suit of armor, and takes upon himself the strange part of a knight-errant in modern life. His purpose is to seek romantic adventure, right wrongs, raise the fallen, deliver the captive, and kill giants, after the fashion of the true knights of old. In his first sally he is given the order of knighthood by the obliging landlord of a wayside inn. His second journey is more eventful. We see him astride his steed Rocinante and accompanied by the faithful Sancho Panza mounted on Dapple, the ass, while the glorious Lady Dulcinea del Toboso has an idealized existence in Don Quixote's dreams. In nearly every adventure the two travelers are losers rather than gainers. Giants turn out to be windmills. Sancho is tossed in a blanket in the inn yard in default of payment for a night's lodging. Galley slaves are freed only to load their liberators with abuse. The blood of a fierce enemy proves to be merely wine from a pierced wine skin. Finally, Don Quixote is brought home ignominiously in a cart, weakened in body, but still retaining his illusions; while his squire is prone to admit de-

feat, though he is hopeful that he may yet achieve the governorship of an island as the reward of his services. The Second Part opens with an account of the convalescence of Don Quixote and the preparation for a third journey. The conversations with the curate and the barber and the dialogue between Sancho and his master are inimitable. On the journey the Lady Dulcinea is sought by our two friends, but fortunately is not found. Don Quixote vanquishes the Knight of the Mirrors, has an adventure with a lion, visits the cave of Montesinos, destroys a puppet show, and falls in with a hospitable duke and duchess, who fool him to the top of his bent. Sancho, after wise instruction from his master, goes off to his governorship of the "Island of Barataria." Despite his downright good sense in meeting his extraordinary responsibilities, Sancho after a little time wisely decides to abdicate and to return to simpler ways of life. By a clever ruse the Knight of the White Moon (Don Quixote's fellow townsman the bachelor Carrasco) induces the knight to return home, and there his adventures are terminated with his death in the presence of his devoted kinsfolk and his friends, including Sancho Panza, who has followed his master's fortunes so faithfully.

We have said that "Don Quixote" is a national book. It pictures marvelously and minutely the Spain of Cervantes' day—the plains, the valleys, the Sierra Morena Mountains, the beauties of the countryside. It tells of serving-boys, of goatherds, of inn-keepers and country wenches and traveling merchants, of the barber with his basin on his head, of Benedictine monks walking under their sunshades, of strolling players, and a host of others. All the more important characters are described with great particularity, and it is to be remarked that there is not a hateful or contemptible one among them all, for the cheerful, urbane Cervantes believed in his fellows and loved to dwell upon human virtues. The foibles of men are touched upon rather than their sins. "Don Quixote was always of a gentle disposition and kindly in all his ways, and hence he was beloved, not only by those of his own house, but by all who knew him." When Cervantes wrote these words he was perhaps unconsciously describing himself.

The humor of "Don Quixote" is of a simple and spontaneous order, though it becomes more subtle as the work develops. Farce passes easily into comedy. One of Cervantes' early biographers tells us that King Philip once looked out of his palace window and saw a man standing at the street corner alternately reading a book and beating his forehead in an ecstasy of mirth. "That fellow," he said, "is either a madman or he is reading 'Don Quixote.'" The exquisite humor of this immortal work fills us all, in fact, with joy. It rests frequently in the incongruity between the ideas and aims of knight and squire. "'It may be,'[1] said Don Quixote, 'that before six days are over, I may have won some kingdom that has others dependent upon it, which will be just the thing to enable thee to be crowned king of one of them.' 'In that case,' said Sancho Panza, 'if I should become a king by one of those miracles your worship speaks of, even Juana Gutierrez, my old woman, would come to be queen and my children infantes.' 'Well, who doubts it?' said Don Quixote. 'I doubt it,' replied Sancho Panza, 'because for my part I am persuaded that though God should shower down kingdoms upon earth, not one of them would fit the head of Mari Gutierrez. Let me tell you, señor, she is not worth two maravedis for a queen; countess will fit her better, and that only with God's help.'" The peerless Lady Dulcinea, to Don Quixote's mind, possesses superhuman beauty, "since all the impossible and fanciful attributes of beauty which the poets apply to their ladies are verified in her." But Sancho, being told of her identity, replies dryly: "I know her well, and let me tell you she can fling a crowbar as well as the lustiest lad in all the town. Giver of all good! but she is a brave lass, and a right and stout one, and fit to be helpmate to any partner that is or is to be."

Sancho's use of the proverb is prodigal. "I have," he says, "more proverbs in me than a book, and when I speak they come so thick together into my mouth that they fall to fighting among themselves to get out." In the entire work some two hundred and fifty-two proverbs are quoted.

[1] The quotations are from Ormsby's translation.

Don Quixote's good will toward his squire is quite genuine, and in his rough and ready way Sancho is devoted to his master. "Remember, Sancho," says Don Quixote when he sends him off to the government of his island, "if thou make virtue thy aim, and take a pride in doing virtuous actions, thou wilt have no cause to envy those who are born princes and lords, for blood is an inheritance, but virtue an acquisition, and virtue has in itself alone a worth that blood does not possess." He ends by expressing some doubts as to Sancho's fitness, but his squire's blunt common sense silences his fears. "Señor," says Sancho, "if your worship thinks I'm not fit for this government, I give it up on the spot; for the mere black of the nail of my soul is dearer to me than my whole body; and I can live just as well, simple Sancho, on bread and onions, as governor, on partridges and capons. . . . But if your worship looks into it, you will see it was your worship alone that put me on to this business of governing; for I know no more about the government of islands than a buzzard; and if there 's any reason to think that because of my being a governor the devil will get hold of me, I'd rather go Sancho to heaven than governor to hell." Whereupon Don Quixote very properly admits that Sancho has "good natural instincts, without which no knowledge is worth anything."

And so we leave this inimitable pair of philosophers.

The Classic Drama

In Spain, as in certain other European countries, the classic drama succeeded the miracle and mystery play, the chronicle play, and the interlude. It will be more convenient to consider in a later chapter these earlier phases of dramatic production. For the present it should be noted that in Spain the classic drama was more closely related to the drama of the Middle Ages than was the case in France, England, or Italy. There was not so much attention paid to artistic form; there was more monotony and repetition. While there was plenty of action, there was little of thought and character development. Yet the Spanish playwrights taught much to Europe. Their prolific themes were drawn upon by dramatists of other na-

tions. The Frenchman Le Sage wrote, "The Spaniards are our masters in the art of planning and skilfully working out a plot."

Before the national classical drama was perfected in Spain, a number of interesting beginnings had been made. Juan de la Encina and Gil Vicente, both writers of the early sixteenth century, claim first attention. The former is reckoned as the founder of both the Spanish and the Portuguese theater. He was a courtier, a priest, and a musician as well as a poet and dramatist. More than half of his dramatic pieces are shepherd plays, or eclogues, written in verse and including songs and occasionally a dance. Gil Vicente produced over forty dramatic pieces, some written in Castilian and some in Portuguese. Most of these are short dramas of the comedy or farce variety, keen, witty, and original. Some of the methods originated by him were accepted promptly by the European theaters. Lope de Rueda, a strolling actor of the middle of the sixteenth century, is a picturesque and interesting figure. His properties were of the slightest and his themes were extremely simple. He chose his characters from low life and awakened laughter through broad farce, merry quibbles, and mistakes of pronunciation, and through comic situations. A few of his plots have come down to us. His earliest follower was Juan de Timoneda, who wrote a number of dramatic sketches of varied character. The best-known of these is "The Blind Beggars and the Boy."

It was **Lope de Vega** (1562–1635) who developed the popular drama and made it a thing of art. Cervantes, who preceded him by fifteen years, was a writer of plays, as we have seen, but Cervantes with more genius had less of the art of the playwright and had slighter inventive powers. Lope de Vega served in early manhood as secretary to the Duke of Alva; then after a spectacular elopement with a lady of the court he shared as a soldier in the disastrous fortunes of the Spanish Armada. On his return he held another secretaryship for a brief period, but for the rest of his life his chief task was the writing of plays and poems. In his earlier years his personal morals were anything but creditable; yet he seems to have had an irresistible charm of manner, and few men have had greater contemporary popularity. There can be no doubt as to his indus-

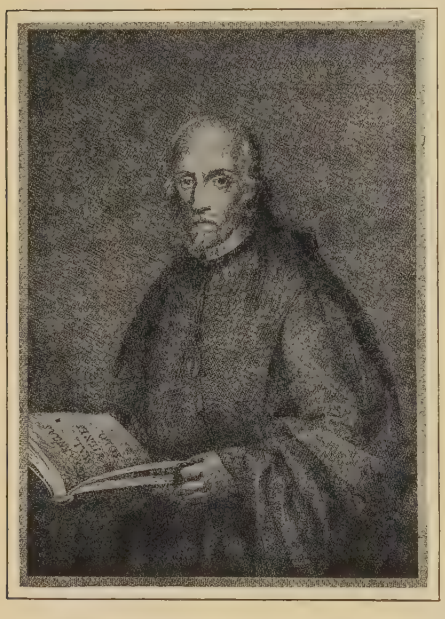
try. Over three hundred of his plays survive from a total of about eighteen hundred, to say nothing of four hundred brief *autos sacramentales*, or symbolical sacred plays. Sismondi estimates that Lope produced on an average a new play of approximately three thousand verses every eight days! Lope himself tells us that one hundred of his plays were each written in a single day. Small wonder that the Spanish people called him "the miracle of nature!" His dramatic pieces include (in addition to comedies and tragedies) farces, mystery plays, dramatized ballads, one-act religious plays, and plays of plot and intrigue of the type known as the comedy of cloak and sword. He always presented national characteristics, such as loyalty to the king and respect for women. The comic element in Lope de Vega's plays was furnished by the *gracioso*—the clown, or clever fellow, a well-known figure in the Spanish drama in general. A high sense of honor, frequently exaggerated, is also a characteristic feature of Spanish plays.

LOPE DE VEGA

The English translators of Lope de Vega have not been numerous. Among his better-known plays are "The Discreet Revenge," "The Battlements of Toro," "The Widow of Valentia," and "The Star of Seville." The last is a general favorite. Its plot turns on a point of honor. The king of Castile, enamored of Estrella (the Star of Seville), is thwarted in his designs by the girl's brother Busto. Enraged by the fact that Busto has drawn upon him and thus touched his honor, the king commissions Sancho, the betrothed of Estrella, to slay her brother. The deed is committed, and the marriage of Sancho and Estrella is thus, of course, rendered impossible.

From first to last the play is full of interest, and the closing dialogue between the lovers is pathetic and moving.[1]

Lope de Vega exercised a profound influence upon the drama in Spain and elsewhere. Before he died there were, it is said, seventy-six dramatic writers in Castile alone. Plays were ordinarily presented by strolling players in inn courtyards. The stage was a covered platform at one end of the yard. Properties were few, and there was no scenery. Seats were provided on the stage and in the rooms fronting on the courtyard. The more common sort of spectator stood in the open. At the outset the author or chief actor addressed his audience; then followed a dance or acted ballad, then the main play in three acts, and at the close a farce to round out the entertainment.



PEDRO CALDERÓN

Calderón (1600–1681) was born in Madrid, like his predecessor Lope de Vega. Though he served as a soldier for a brief period, his life was mostly devoted to literature and theatrical production. He was ordained as a priest in 1651. In general he led an exemplary life, and charity, modesty, and courtesy were his characteristic traits. In comparison with Lope de Vega he seems to have been

[1] See the analysis of the play in Brander Matthews's "Development of the Drama," and extracts in Longfellow's "Poets and Poetry of Europe" and in the Warner Library.

more of a poet and less of a dramatist. He had less force and fertility of invention, less humor, and less simplicity and directness. Yet he possessed greater powers of imagination, was more skillful in construction, and was at his best in tragedy, especially in the creation of somber situations. He was supreme in his handling of the *autos sacramentales*, the one-act Spanish symbolical religious plays that have already been mentioned. The mysteries of faith seem to have impressed him deeply—he was a symbolist more than a realist.

Of the one hundred comedies of Calderón some are well known. Shelley's free translation of the "Magico Prodigioso" is justly esteemed, for it contains striking scenes and real poetry; as, for example, these lines:

"Neither Fortune,
The monstrous phantom which pursues success,
That careful miser, that free prodigal,
Who ever alternates with changeful hand
Evil and good, reproach and fame; nor Time,
That loadstar of the ages, to whose beam
The winged years speed o'er the intervals
Of their unequal revolutions; nor
Heaven itself, whose beautiful bright stars
Rule and adorn the world, can ever make
The least division between thee and me,
Since now I find a refuge in thy favor."

Edward Fitzgerald has freely translated eight of the dramas of Calderón, mostly in verse. Of this collection the best is "The Mayor of Zalamea." This play has three acts, fifteen scenes, and a dozen characters, one of whom, the farmer Pedro Crespo, who afterwards becomes the mayor, is a real creation. The pictures of army life and of intrigue are well depicted. Crespo's prompt action as mayor in putting to death the captain who had dishonored his daughter brings the play to a fine climax. In this, as in Calderón's other plays, beautiful lyrics are introduced. He was, indeed, one of the foremost of the lyric poets of Spain. Lowell's poem "The Nightingale in the Study" does not seem to give him too high praise:

"A bird is singing in my brain
And bubbling o'er with mingled fancies,
Gay, tragic, rapt, right heart of Spain
Fed with the sap of old romances.

. . . . . .

"Cloaked shapes, a twanging of guitars,
A rush of feet, and rapiers clashing,
Then silence deep with breathless stars,
And overhead a white hand flashing.

"O music of all moods and climes,
Vengeful, forgiving, sensuous, saintly,
Where still, between the Christian chimes,
The Moorish cymbal tinkles faintly!

. . . . . .

"Bird of to-day, thy songs are stale
To his, my singer of all weathers,
My Calderón, my nightingale,
My Arab soul in Spanish feathers."

Lyric Poetry

From early times to the present, lyric poetry has been constantly produced in Spain. It would seem as if the common thoughts, feelings, and life of the Spaniard have all found easy and natural lyric expression. While it is true that the proportion of love poems is comparatively small and that poets of the first rank are few in Spain, yet the number of poets is very considerable. A study of Bowring's "Ancient Poetry and Romances of Spain" and of the Spanish section of Longfellow's "Poets and Poetry of Europe" gives one a vivid impression of the large number of beautiful, if not great, Spanish poems. Farnell's "Spanish Prose and Poetry" may also be consulted.

Juan Ruiz, the archpriest of Hita, is esteemed as the most original of medieval Spanish poets. He wrote six or seven thousand lines of verse, mingling moral maxims, religious admonitions, and fervent love passages, and displaying imagination and satirical power. His work dates from the first half of the fourteenth century.

Half a century later appeared the Marqués de Santillana, who wrote at a time when allegories and artificial literary conceits of all kinds were in vogue. He was a man of great learning and influence and had much to do with the improvement of Castilian poetry. Through his introduction of Italian classical and Renaissance standards his poems were influential in the development of the drama. He also wrote a treatise on the history of Spanish poetry.

Jorge Manrique, of almost the same period, a member of one of the most distinguished Spanish families, has left a masterpiece—an ode on the death of his father, which has been exquisitely translated by Longfellow. We give two of the eighty-four stanzas:

"Our lives are rivers, gliding free
To that unfathomed, boundless sea,
The silent grave:
Thither all earthly pomp and boast
Roll, to be swallowed up and lost
In one dark wave.

"Thither, the mighty torrents stray,
Thither, the brook pursues its way,
And tinkling rill.
There all are equal. Side by side,
The poor man and the son of pride
Lie calm and still."

In the Classical age of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Spain produced a number of poets. Juan Boscan and Garcilaso de la Vega brought about a great change in Spanish poetry through their eclogues, epistles, odes, and sonnets, written in Italian styles and measures. Fernando de Herrera (died in 1596), known as "the Divine," produced a series of beautiful lyrics. An interesting figure of the same period is Fray Luis Ponce de Leon, a friar and a professor of theology. His original poems are religious in character and are among the most attractive that Spain has produced. These sublime sacred odes reveal a man of meek and sweet character. Fray Luis is remembered also for his translations from the classics, the Psalms, and the Song of Songs.

The mystic writers of the sixteenth century exerted a considerable influence on literature and thought. Luis de Granada, a Spanish preacher, is remembered for his books of prayers and meditations. San Juan de la Cruz (1542–1591) is an even more important figure. His writings are of a deeply devotional and mystical character—eloquent and rich and beautiful in style and diction. Santa Teresa (died in 1582) has an international prominence and is reckoned by some as the greatest of Spanish women. She early took the religious habit, possessing a most religious and spiritual nature. Her letters fill four volumes. They reveal a talented, pure, and womanly woman who believed herself to be inspired, and who wrote with an air of authority. The letters were written boldly and rapidly and, while unequal in value, are sometimes extremely graceful in style. Santa Teresa, besides her letters, has left a romance and a number of poems.

In the next century, apart from Lope de Vega and Calderón, both of whom were poets as well as dramatists, the chief poetical writers were Luis de Góngora and Don Francisco Quevedo. The former was an artificial and pedantic writer who, however, influenced his generation considerably and had many imitators. Quevedo is considered the greatest satirist of Spain; he achieved distinction both in prose and in verse. His poems are brilliant and humorous.

The eighteenth century was a time of decline in poetry as in other branches of literature. Nicolas Fernandez de Moratín was the chief poet and was also a writer of tragedies and comedies, one of which was the first Spanish play constructed on the French dramatic model. His most widely known poem, "The Ships of Cortés Destroyed," is one of the best of Spanish epics. At the beginning of the nineteenth century stands Manuel José Quintana, poet, skeptic, historian, and critic.

The Modern Period

Earlier literature of the modern period. Spain in her more recent literature has shown herself influenced powerfully by the general currents of European thought. José de Espronceda (1810–

1842), the brilliant youth with a fiery soul, was strongly attracted to Byron and possessed some of Byron's characteristics. He suggests also the Italian Leopardi, his contemporary. Espronceda had a passionate love for freedom, a romantic impulse, a spirit of revolt, —qualities that found expression in lyric poems full of passion and beauty, in the lyric drama "El Estudiante de Salamanca," and in the narrative poem, unfinished at his death, "El Diablo Mundo" ("The World Spirit"). Always a liberal, he took part in the fortunes of the revolutionary movement in Spain. At times he lived in England and France. In his brief career of thirty-two years he earned the right to be considered the leading Spanish lyric poet of the nineteenth century. Rivas (1791–1865), Zorrilla (1817–1893), and Becquer (1836–1870) are romantic poets. Their work is interesting, but in our narrow limits cannot be dwelt upon.

In the field of the novel the modern literature of Spain has excelled. "Fernan Caballero" (1796–1877) wrote many tales, for the most part sketches of modern life. She was by birth half German, but in all her instincts wholly Spanish. She hid her real name, Cecilia Böhl von Faber, in a masculine pseudonym, like George Sand and George Eliot. Her first and best book, "La Gaviota" ("The Sea Gull"), was published after she had reached fifty years of age; it brought her instant fame. She delighted to picture the intimate life of Andalusia, the manners, character, and habits of its people; and she also showed a fondness for nature, for old legends, ballads, and folklore. Don Pedro A. de Alarcón (1833–1891), very popular in his day, is remembered chiefly for his picaresque tale "El Sombrero de Tres Picos" ("The Three-Cornered Hat") and for his three volumes of short stories, "Novelas Cortas." Of more consequence are Juan Valera (1824–1905) and José María de Pereda (1833–1906). The former is a brilliant stylist, gifted as a short-story writer and the author of several novels, of which the first, "Pepita Jiménez," is probably the best. Pereda is more realistic and more orthodox. He is at home in his descriptions of life in the mountains of the north of Spain, as in his novel "Don Gonzalo González de la Gonzalera." City life is the theme of his "Pedro Sánchez." Realistic fiction in Spain owes much to Pereda.

Recent literature. There can be no question that Spain is taking a place of considerable importance in the current literature of Europe, and this in the fields of drama, poetry, and fiction alike. Conflict between the old and the new is exercising Spain more perhaps than any other country of Europe. There is a very striking difference between the Spanish works of the last generation and those of today. The publishers' lists each season in Spain contain works of great merit, and the number seems to be constantly increasing.

The Spanish drama has not been deeply influenced by the Realism and Naturalism of other countries. However, great advances have been made; the new drama is finely adapted to the present-day needs of Spain. José Echegaray (1833–1916) ushered in the newer type of play. He achieved extraordinary success in "El Gran Galeoto." It presents a remarkable study. The principal figure does not appear at any time on the stage, but is felt as a vital force affecting for evil the entire progress of the action. Over fifty plays were written by Echegaray. A great many dramas have also been produced by Pérez Galdós, of which "The Duchess of San Quentin"[1] is perhaps the most representative. He has a serious purpose, and his thought is lofty and highly idealistic. Jacinto Benavente is a phenomenon of the day. He has written almost one hundred plays—witty, satirical, brilliant, the work of a real dramatic artist. He has entered very successfully even the field of the allegorical drama. A volume of his plays in English has recently appeared.[2] The comedies of the brothers Alvarez Quintero are full of color and present many interesting types. Martínez Sierra has produced plays and lyric dramas. He portrays the best of modern Spanish life. He is an idealist and has sometimes been compared to Maeterlinck.

The Modernist movement in Spanish poetry had its beginning, it is interesting to note, in the work of Rubén Darío, the Nicaraguan poet. Sierra, already mentioned, is noted for his poetry as well as for his plays; so is Eduardo Marquina, who has achieved success

[1] This and other plays are included in the volume of translations entitled "Masterpieces of Modern Spanish Drama."

[2] Published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

in poetry, lyric drama, and tragedy alike. Salvator Rueda and Juan Jiménez are two other popular poets. The latter, in addition to a number of melancholy lyrics of rare beauty, has written forceful prose. Francisco Villaespesa, the author of many exquisite sonnets, has great lyric power and beauty of style. In his elegies he expresses in a wonderful way the sense of the desolation that comes from bereavement. The list of Spanish poets is a long one—we have mentioned only a few representative names.

In closing our sketch of recent Spanish literature we give a suggestion of what has been accomplished recently in the field of fiction. Armando Palacio Valdés, representing the new Realistic school, has won a great reputation. His story "José," presenting the life of a fishing-village, has been widely translated into the languages of Europe. Another realistic writer is that remarkable woman Emilia Pardo Bazán, who has excelled in other fields perhaps even more than in fiction. Pérez Galdós has already been mentioned. His prose is perhaps more highly esteemed than his plays. "Episodios Nacionales," brilliantly written, are novels treated from the historical point of view. His "Doña Perfecta," a religious novel, has been widely read in English, but is an unpleasant story at best. Ricardo León turns in his novels to an earlier time for his inspiration. In an age of doubt he seeks to revive the impulses of the period of chivalry and faith. Such is the aim of "El Amor de los Amores." Another of his novels has been translated into English under the title "Son of the Hidalgos."[1] Valle-Inclán is an interesting figure among present-day novelists and also has won distinction as a litterateur. Pío Baroja is a brilliant and epigrammatic writer. One of his successes is the story of a commonplace young man of large ambitions, recently translated into English under the title "Cæsar or Nothing." His autobiographical volume has also appeared in an English translation "Youth and Egolatry."[2] Blasco Ibáñez (1866–1928) is considered by many one of the chief literary men of our day. He was a prolific writer. Perhaps no other story of the World War has had such vogue as "The Four Horse-

[1] Published by Doubleday, Page & Company.

[2] Both of the books cited are published by Alfred A. Knopf.

men of the Apocalypse." His other war novel, "Mare Nostrum," was less successful. Both have striking scenes but are marred by unworthy passages. "The Shadow of the Cathedral" has greater strength than either. It is notable for the impression which it conveys of the cathedral in Toledo and for its frank discussion of the Church question in Spain. The general appraisal of the writings of Blasco Ibáñez and of other recent Spanish novelists cannot be made as yet, but the modern novel clearly owes much to Spain.

It is evident that the wit of Cervantes, the imagination of Lope de Vega, and the profound philosophy of Calderón are not lying dormant, but are alive today in the work of many important authors in the land to which they give such distinction.

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Suggested Topics

A study of "The Cid."
Spanish and English ballads—a comparison.
Spain in her great period.
"Amadís de Gaula" and the romances of chivalry.
Life of Cervantes.
The story of "Don Quixote."
A study of the humor of "Don Quixote."
Proverbs from "Don Quixote."
Lope de Vega and his plays.
Calderón and his plays.
A study of a modern Spanish novel.
A study of a recent Spanish play.

CHAPTER VIII

FRENCH LITERATURE

Origins of the French People and Language

Our knowledge of the inhabitants of what we now know as the land of France is very meager until the time of Cæsar. The land was referred to by the Romans as Gaul, and Cæsar mentions three tribes as occupying it at the time of his campaigns—the Belgians, the Celts, and the Aquitanians. They probably had Celtic and Germanic connections. From the time of Cæsar's conquests (58–50 B.C.) to the beginning of the break-up of the Roman Empire, Gaul remained a pretty thoroughly Romanized province. At the time of the great movements of the barbarian races in the fifth century of the Christian Era it was the Franks, a Germanic tribe from the lower Rhine region, who secured the strongest foothold in Gaul. We can touch only lightly on the historical events prior to the beginnings of French literature. Among the most important are the extension of the Frankish kingdom under Clovis and his successors in the sixth century, the defeat of the Saracens by Charles Martel at Tours in 732, and the enlightened reign of Charlemagne, together with the extension and transformation of his kingdom into the Holy Roman Empire in the year 800. After his death there followed a period of decline, confusion, and practical anarchy. The Capetian line of kings, with its troublesome group of semi-independent nobles, worked out for itself during the eleventh and twelfth centuries the political and economic order known as the feudal system.

The language spoken in the Romanized province of Gaul was a form of Latin similar to that of Rome itself. This, however, in France as in the various other Western lands, became transformed with the passing of the centuries into a kind of debased, or simplified,

Latin, as indicated in the chapter on Italian literature. The language of the invading Franks was a Germanic dialect, but the Franks accepted more from the language of their new home than they contributed to it. The result was a form of speech still further simplified, with only a small addition of Germanic words. Thus, alongside the written language, which remained Latin of a comparatively pure form, there grew up gradually the common speech, known at first as Romance and later as French. The earliest example of this Old French, or Romana Rustica, as it was called, is the document known as the Strasbourg Oaths (842), in which the two brothers Charles the Bald and Louis made their pledges respectively in the French and Teutonic forms of the language. Old French not long afterward divided into the Langue d'Oïl, or speech of the North, and the Langue d'Oc, or Provençal, that of the South. Various historical circumstances contributed to the extension of the Northern speech, so that it finally became the accepted standard for the whole of France. Modern French, as distinguished from Old French, may be said to date from about the time of Villon, toward the close of the fifteenth century. The French language, although a member of the Romance group, represents a much wider departure from the Latin than do the Italian and Spanish languages.

The French Spirit in Literature

France has been the schoolmaster of western Europe in the matter of conscientious devotion to form and style. There is in the best French writers an ambition to clothe great ideas in appropriate and adequate form—an ambition which has been in a very large measure happily fulfilled. It is true that this devotion to form has at certain periods fallen into a rather barren formalism. But on the whole the tendency to formal and stylistic excellence, fostered throughout almost the entire modern period by the labors of the French Academy and other similar bodies, has been an influence for good.

So far as substance is concerned, French literature has exhibited two apparently contradictory tendencies. The bulk of it reveals a

bold and fearless invasion of all the fields of human thought—a serious attempt to reach the truth of the matter at the cost of traditional loyalties of many sorts. The apparently contradictory tendency—the comic spirit, the *esprit gaulois*, the satirical tone of banter and raillery—has actually reënforced the more serious side of the literary product. The two go hand in hand in a general way, though not always found in combination in the same writer or literary movement.

The Medieval Period

The "Song of Roland." For the purposes of our study the literature of France may be said to begin with the epic splendor of the "Song of Roland." It is an idealized presentation of the battle of Roncesvalles and the heroic exploits of the peers of Charlemagne in that action.

The first part of the poem recounts the treachery of Ganelon, who, to satisfy his deep-seated enmity against Roland, the greatest of the peers, betrays the rearguard of Charlemagne's army, which is in charge of Roland, into the hands of the Saracens. The second part deals with the battle itself. "'Great is the host of the heathen,' saith Oliver, 'and few is our fellowship. Roland, fair comrade, I pray thee, sound thy horn of ivory, that Charles may hear it and return again with all his host.'"[1] But Roland in his pride refuses. The battle cry of Montjoie is raised by the host. "Then they rode forward, God, how proudly; spurring their horses for the more speed, and fell a-smiting—how else should they do?" The battle is described as consisting chiefly of a series of personal encounters, in which nearly all the Saracen barons are slain. But finally the tide begins to turn, and after five terrific onsets only sixty of Roland's men remain alive. "With dolor and pain, and in great torment, Count Roland blows his horn of ivory, that the bright blood springs out of his mouth, and the temples of his brain are broken. Mighty is the blast of the horn, and Charles, passing the mountains, hears it." One after one, Oliver, Count Walter, Archbishop Turpin, are stricken down. Roland staggers a spear's cast over the Spanish line and up a little hill. "He has turned his face toward Spain, and he begins

[1] The quotations are from the translation by Isabel Butler, published by Houghton Mifflin Company.

to call many things to remembrance—all the lands he had won by his valor, and sweet France, and the men of his lineage, and Charles his liege lord, who had brought him up in his household; and he cannot help but weep. . . . And again he confesses his sins and begs forgiveness of God. . . . With his right hand he offers his glove to God, and Saint Gabriel has taken it from his hand. Then his head sinks on his arm, and with clasped hands he hath gone to his end. And God sent his cherubim, and Saint Michael of the Seas, and with them went Saint Gabriel, and they carried the soul of the count into Paradise." The final section of the poem recounts the return of Charles with his army, his pursuit and slaughter of the enemy, the bearing of the bodies of Roland, Oliver, and Turpin to France, the death of Aude, the sister of Oliver, upon learning the fate of her lover Roland, and the ordeal by battle which determines the guilt of Ganelon, who is torn asunder by four stallions, and whose kindred are hanged.

It is with this baptism of blood and slaughter that French literature emerges into view. The "Song of Roland" is a poem of four thousand ten-syllable lines. It is divided into stanzas of irregular length and employs assonance[1] rather than regular rime. The date of its composition was about the end of the eleventh century. It is written in a stately and sonorous but somewhat straggling style, with passages of fine descriptive power and frequent use of epic repetition. It may be assumed to present a fairly accurate statement of the ideals of Charlemagne's time—the aristocratic ideals of battle prowess, loyal vassalage, comradeship, and a rather formal religious devotion. It is the best example of a group of poems known as ***chansons de geste*** ("songs of great deeds"), the subject matter of which was for the most part episodes from French history, centered chiefly in the Emperor Charlemagne. They were produced in large numbers from the end of the eleventh to the end of the fourteenth century, although only about a hundred have come down to us. Among the most important, aside from the "Song of Roland," are "Amis and Amiles," presenting the theme of devoted comradeship, somewhat as pictured by Chaucer in the "Knight's Tale"; "Fierabras," in which is treated the favorite theme of a Christian knight's falling in love with a beautiful Saracen princess; and

[1] For a definition of this term see page 174.

"Huon de Bordeaux," with its fairy motive and the figure of Oberon. In all these poems we find a certain similarity in type of incident, emphasis on the motives of war and religion, strong but rather crude characterization, and high intensity of narrative movement. Their authorship is wholly unknown.

Running parallel in date of composition with the *chansons de gestes* were the **romances of Arthur.** The development of the Arthurian cycle in France, as in England, was effected through the gradual connection and fusion of stories. Many of them were originally quite independent of Arthur himself, but all finally became merged into a great cycle of which he forms the center, as Charlemagne does of the *chansons de gestes.* The Arthurian stories, as developed in France, appeared first in the form of prose romances. Some of the best of these were from the hand of Walter Map, who spent most of his life in England and probably drew largely upon English sources for his material. The most conspicuous name, however, in the development of the French Arthurian cycle is that of Chrestien de Troyes, who lived about the middle of the twelfth century and who popularized many of the stories by putting them into excellent poetic form. So far as subject matter is concerned, the element of original and significant value in the Arthurian romance is that of chivalry. Of this remarkable institution we can mention only the distinguishing features. First of all, there is the sentiment of loyal devotion to one's lord, together with the delight in combat which naturally goes with it. Second, we have the emphasis on the refinement and grace of courtly manners—the ideal of courtesy, revealing itself, for example, in deference to ladies, in the elaborate rules of the tournament, and in the high sense of honor in dealing with a worthy enemy. The third notable element is that of religious exaltation, most fully expressed through the mystic splendor of the Grail, probably the richest and deepest symbol of medieval experience.[1] And, finally, we have the element of romantic love, a

[1] The Grail was the cup used by Jesus and his disciples at the Last Supper. It was, according to tradition, committed to the keeping of the Knights of the Grail, but upon the failure of that group to live up to its holy vows the Grail disappeared. Going in quest of it constituted the highest adventure of medieval knighthood.

supreme devotion to one's lady—not usually one's wife, for romance was commonly conceived of as coming to an end with the convention of marriage. The inspiration to lofty conduct which comes with such devotion was not seldom combined with a sense of tragic fate; as, for example, in the stories of Lancelot and Tristram. These ideals, with the exception of the first,—that of vassalage and combat,—while not altogether lacking in the Charlemagne stories, are so slender as to be practically negligible. They constitute, on the other hand, the peculiar excellence of the Arthurian stories and impart to them a richer, more mellow, more appealing quality than the *chansons de gestes* afford.

A third division of heroic narrative, parallel in time with the Charlemagne and Arthurian cycles, is that of the romances of antiquity. These are in verse form and present under the glamor of medieval chivalry the exploits of Alexander, Æneas, and Cæsar, the stories of Troy and of Thebes, and many other tales from classical sources.

In the field of **lyric poetry** also we find that medieval France has much to be proud of. Here again it is the twelfth and thirteenth centuries that show the climax of poetic power. The Provençal poets, writing in the Langue d'Oc, or dialect of the south of France,—soft, mellow, harmonious, beautifully cadenced,—and choosing for the most part the themes of romantic passion and chivalric devotion, have exerted a strong influence upon lovers of sensuous poetry from their own day to ours. Bernart de Ventadorn writes:

> "No marvel is it if I sing
> Better than other minstrels all;
> For more than they I am love's thrall,
> And all myself therein I fling."[1]

The very names of the Provençal poets have a haunting sound in one's ears: Arnaut Daniel, Bertran de Born, Piere Vidal, Jaufre Rudel, singers of love songs according to the models of their times —*sirvente, retroensa, balada*—far away and long ago.

The contemporary group of lyric poets in the north of France are frank, exuberant, spontaneous, free in their tears and laughter,

[1] Translation by H. W. Preston.

graceful and melodious in their versification, and filled with a truly poetic sensibility. Thus, in the words of Marie de France, the lover addresses her dead love:

"A little space below the grass,
Out of the sun and shade,
But worlds away from me, alas,
Down there where you are laid."[1]

The lyrics of the fourteenth century, while achieving a more perfect form, did so somewhat at the expense of poetic spirit and feeling. This period witnessed the formal crystallization of the ballade, rondeau, and other artificial forms into the guise in which we still know them. There is much of graceful and dainty and delicate emotion, but the sincerity and directness of the earlier lyrics are not often present. The memorable names in this period are Christine de Pisan, a woman of true poetic gift; Alain Chartier, the plaintive poet of "La Belle Dame sans Merci" and the friend of the poor and the outcast; and Charles d'Orleans, long a political prisoner in England, beguiling his days with the composition of exquisitely finished poems, like the rondeau beginning:

"We'll to the woods and gather may,
Fresh from the footprints of the rain;
We'll to the woods, at every vein
To drink the spirit of the day."[2]

A few words as to the composition and circulation of the epic and lyric poetry of medieval France may be in order. The poet, or composer, was known in the North as *trouvère* and in the South as *troubadour*—variant forms of the same word, meaning literally "finder," "inventor," "maker." It was still some two or three hundred years before printing was to come to the aid of the poet, and therefore publication was mainly by word of mouth. Sometimes, especially in the castle hall and before an aristocratic audience, the poet himself recited his love lyric or his passionate tale of knightly

[1] Translation by Arthur O'Shaughnessy.
[2] Translation by W. E. Henley.

romance. More commonly, however, the recitation or chanting of the poem was by a *jongleur*, a professional reciter, who gathered a crowd about him in the town square, or in the market place, or before the church door, and, having secured the attention of his audience by a bit of tumbling or juggling by himself or his assistant, launched into the story of Roland or of Ogier the Dane or of Merlin. He heightened his narrative by all the resources of voice, expression, posture, and gesture at his command, stopped at critical points in the story to take up a collection, and finally arrived at his glowing conclusion.

Along with the prose romance and the epic and lyric types of poetry went also the **allegorical poem.** The supreme example of this in French literature is "The Romance of the Rose," begun by Guillaume de Lorris, who wrote about forty-five hundred lines, and continued by Jean de Meun to nearly twenty-three thousand lines. It is a dream story of the lover's quest of the rose, or love, and the characters are Courtesy, Reason, Danger, False Seeming, and the like. Lorris's portion is in praise of that body of fantastic sentiment known as the "court of love" and is of remarkably high poetic value in both form and substance. Chaucer's translation of a portion (about seventeen hundred lines) will give the reader of English a fairly good idea of Lorris's part of the poem. Jean de Meun turns the quest into a somewhat cynical satire upon the follies and shortcomings of the society of his times.

Medieval society in France had, of course, its popular as well as its aristocratic level, and this humbler sphere of life is represented by an abundant body of literature. One of the most interesting types is the **fabliau,** or short verse tale, almost always anonymous, middle class in its coloring, comic and sometimes very coarse in its tone, and holding the mirror of ridicule up to almost every aspect of society. There are some two hundred fabliaux extant, ranging in length from twenty to five or six hundred lines and produced for the most part between the latter half of the twelfth century and the latter half of the fourteenth. Boccaccio drew upon the fabliaux for his "Decameron"; and English parallels will be found in Chaucer's tales of the reeve, the shipman, the miller, and the friar.

Rather more ambitious than the fabliau, but springing from the same humble soil and written in much the same vein, is the strange poem known as "The Romance of Reynard." It is a cluster or composite of animal stories, expanded by successive accretions to a formidable length, with the fox as its hero. By his happy combination of guile, shrewdness, and impudence he outwits the other animals and achieves his purpose. There is a sly undertone of satire running through the poem, which may be said in a general way to symbolize common sense and prudence as opposed to the lofty heroics of the poems of chivalry.

We are still in the realm of popular and democratic appeal when we enter the field of **medieval French drama.** As in most of the literatures of western Europe, the drama in France was the offspring of the Church. Beginning as early as the eleventh century with simple and naïve attempts in Latin to dramatize portions of the liturgy, the stream expands into a multitude of mysteries (plays on Biblical themes) and miracle plays (legends of the saints and of the Virgin). The plays of later date sometimes extended to twenty-five thousand lines or more and required several days for their presentation. These later plays are all in the common speech. The high tide in the production of mysteries and miracle plays was the middle of the fifteenth century, the closing years of the medieval period. The actors in the religious plays were at first members of the clergy, but as these plays became more popular they passed into the hands of the craft guilds. Later, companies of actors were organized; such, for example, as the Confraternity of the Passion, which presented the Passion group of mysteries.

The secular drama of France was somewhat later than the religious type in getting under way, but when once started had a development parallel with that of the latter. Moralities, satirizing under the veil of allegory the follies and defects of Church, State, and private life, were numerous and sometimes of prodigious length. *Soties,* satirical comedies chiefly on political subjects, were another type. The farce, more significant than any of these, was a dramatic sketch, usually about five hundred lines in length and containing from two to five characters. It dealt generally with some comic in-

cident of ordinary life, was satirical and often licentious in tone, and on the whole was of much the same character as the fabliau, from which in many cases it was drawn. We mention by name only one, "Master Pathelin," in which one rogue outwits another,—the most notable of all medieval French farces, written probably by Antoine de la Salle. The medieval drama, secular as well as religious, was almost wholly of unknown authorship; and prior to 1548, when a professional Italian troupe visited Paris, all the acting was by amateur performers.

Medieval French prose was abundant in quantity, but we can mention only one or two of the best examples. The exquisite love story of "Aucassin and Nicolette" has been happily translated into English by Andrew Lang. The prose narrative is occasionally interrupted by verse interludes.

Aucassin, the handsome young son of the Count of Biaucaire, will not take up arms against his father's enemies unless he is allowed to wed Nicolette, "his sweet lady whom he loved so well." But she is a Saracen slave girl, stolen in her childhood from Carthage, and therefore, says the Count, it may not be. They are held apart from each other, but, each escaping separately, they finally meet on the forest edge, ride to the seaside, and are carried by ship to the land of Torelore, where grotesque adventures follow. The Saracens capture the city, the two lovers are taken on separate ships, the fleet is scattered by a tempest, Aucassin finally reaches Biaucaire, and Nicolette is carried to Carthage to the king, her father. Recognition takes place, and plans are made for giving Nicolette in marriage to a paynim lord. She stains her face, disguises herself as a harper, and persuades a mariner to carry her to Biaucaire. The Count and his wife are dead, and Aucassin is lord of the castle, but thinks only of "Nicolette the fair, and the dainty face of her he had loved so many years." Nicolette, on the castle staircase, sings the story of herself and Aucassin, and upon his entreaties undertakes to bring his sweet lady to him. Eight days later he is bidden to a friend's house and there finds Nicolette, and the next day they are wedded.

"Sweet the song, the story sweet;
There is no man hearkens it,
No man living 'neath the sun,
So outwearied, so foredone,

Sick and woful, worn and sad,
But is healed, but is glad,
'Tis so sweet."[1]

Perhaps the most notable of the medieval chroniclers was Froissart, whose copious volumes are colored with the fading light of chivalry and whose descriptions, though limited strictly to the aristocratic circles of society, are often full of picturesque charm and dignity.

It will be seen that the medieval period in French literature was a very productive one—intense and colorful, even if somewhat ill organized. Substance, on the whole, meant more than form to these early writers, whose emotional impulse often involved them in a tangled maze of narrative long drawn out. But the heart of the matter was sound, and the necessary discipline of attention to form was not to be long delayed.

The Renaissance Period

The period of the Renaissance covered, roughly speaking, the sixteenth century. The significance of this great movement in France, as in other western European countries, was its emphasis upon individualism rather than the dictatorship of institutions such as Church and State. The age was one of exploration—not only of distant shores and seas but of the foundations of knowledge and belief, of the cultures of the past, of the heart and mind of man. It contained, on the one hand, the assertion of personality, and, on the other, the recognition of the need of self-scrutiny, self-discipline, self-restraint. It was the beginning of the essentially modern emphasis upon the scientific spirit, which dares all things except to trifle with the truth. There is therefore in the art of the Renaissance an overflowing of life into new channels, and at the same time the beginning of that subjection of all things to the rule of reason, which, in the two centuries following the sixteenth, was to play so supreme a part in the literature and life of France.

François Villon may be thought of as one who has fallen into the new current of things long before lesser men have escaped from

[1] Translation by Andrew Lang.

the old. He was born in 1431, was a scholar, a vagabond, a fugitive, a poet of rare power, a companion of thieves, and on one occasion, at least, barely escaped hanging. He feasted one day and starved the next, was tenderly devoted to his aged mother and bitter against his faithless mistress Katherine de Vaucelles. Just when and where he finally "shuffled off this mortal coil" nobody knows. His best work is in the form of the ballade, in which he reveals a mastery such as no other poet has ever shown. Moreover, the simplicity and directness of his phrasing and the sharpness of the personal element of joy and pain, ugly reality and ideal vision, distinguish him as modern,—by contrast, for example, with Charles d'Orleans, living in his pleasant but artificial system of sentiments and language. Rossetti's translation of his "Ballade des Dames du Temps Jadis" will indicate the nature of the ballade and will also give something of the charm of Villon as a poet:

BALLADE OF DEAD LADIES

"Tell me now in what hidden way is
Lady Flora the lovely Roman?
Where's Hipparchia, and where is Thaïs,
Neither of them the fairer woman?
Where is Echo, beheld of no man,
Only heard on river and mere,—
She whose beauty was more than human? . . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

"Where's Héloïse, the learned nun,
For whose sake Abeillard, I ween,
Lost manhood and put priesthood on?
(From love he won such dule and teen.)
And where, I pray you, is the queen
Who willed that Buridan should steer
Sewed in a sack's mouth down the Seine? . . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

"White Queen Blanche, like a queen of lilies,
With a voice like any mermaiden,—
Bertha Broadfoot, Beatrice, Alice,
And Ermengarde, the lady of Maine,—

And that good Joan whom Englishmen
At Rouen doomed and burned her there,—
Mother of God, where are they then? . . .
But where are the snows of yester-year?

"Nay, never ask this week, fair lord,
Where they are gone, nor yet this year,
Save with this much for an overword,—
But where are the snows of yester-year?"

Clément Marot (1497–1544) is second only to Villon and D'Orleans in effective handling of the ballade and other popular verse forms. In his best work he is concrete and personal, but reflects the more graceful, tender, and elegant sentiments rather than the deeper and sterner ones.

The mid-century period, so far as poetry is concerned, was occupied chiefly by Ronsard and the remarkable literary group of which he was the center—the group known as the Pléiade. They were a brotherhood of seven poets, who undertook, through a studious cultivation of classical forms, especially of the Horatian ode, to impart to French poetry a distinction of style and a carefully wrought line. Their work was largely influential in establishing the Alexandrine—the twelve-syllable iambic line—in its commanding place as the vehicle of almost all later French poetry. The most significant member of the group was **Pierre de Ronsard** (1524–1585). He was called by his admiring friends "the prince of poets," and was a most scrupulous artist in verse. He produced a great mass of poetry, not all of equal excellence, but revealing, especially in his sonnets and other lyrics, a haunting melancholy of tone, a deep response to natural beauty, and a well-ordered though not artificial style. Many of his poems are based upon the impulse of seizing the joy of life before it flies—and how quickly it flies! The exquisite sonnet "Of his Lady's Old Age" is typical:

"When you are very old, at evening
You'll sit and spin beside the fire, and say,
Humming my songs, 'Ah well, ah well-a-day,
When I was young, of me did Ronsard sing.'
None of your maidens that doth hear the thing,

Albeit with her weary task foredone,
But wakens at my name, and calls you one
Blest, to be held in long remembering.

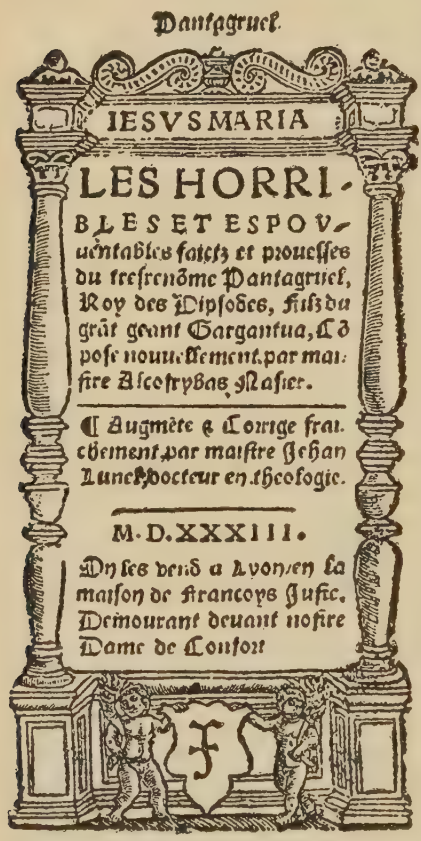
"I shall be low beneath the earth, and laid
On sleep, a phantom in the myrtle shade,
While you beside the fire, a grandam gray,
My love, your pride, remember and regret;
Ah, love me, love, we may be happy yet,
And gather roses while 'tis called to-day."[1]

The satires of Mathurin Régnier (1573–1613) bring the poetic voice of the Renaissance to a worthy close. They were the best that France had yet produced. There is in Régnier's work a rare fusion of insight and of restraint that makes him a social critic of unusual soundness and a typical exponent of the best that was in the French Renaissance.

The prose of the sixteenth century is centered in the two outstanding figures of Rabelais and Montaigne. **François Rabelais,** probably on the whole the most significant name of the French Renaissance, was born at Chinon about the year 1495 and died in 1553. He was a man of singularly independent mind and of varied experience—monk, priest, scholar, physician, man of the world. His "Gargantua" and "Pantagruel" are huge, misshapen narratives—one hesitates to call them fiction in any strict sense of the term—of the adventures, activities, and opinions of the two giants, father and son, who give the titles to the books. The modern reader is baffled by the apparent jumble of grotesqueness, buffoonery, extravagance, lofty seriousness, coarse jocularity, and confusion of allegory, fiction, and reality which he finds in trying to read these books. It is only by long contact with Rabelais that one penetrates through this incoherent surface medley to what it all signifies—an immense, almost voracious appetite for the good things of life, sensuous as well as spiritual, and a wholesome scorn and satire directed at mock heroics and embalmed traditions. The only way to take life seriously, says Rabelais, is to take it gayly, to devour it eagerly, to seize upon it when and where and how you will.

[1] Translation by Andrew Lang.

Michel de Montaigne, whose work fell within the generation following Rabelais, was born in 1533, was something of an infant prodigy, studied law, served as a soldier, was mayor of Bordeaux, spent his last twenty years in retirement and literary work varied by periods of travel, witnessed with a philosophic eye the fading of the early Renaissance dreams of an ideal society, and died in 1592. Montaigne's work is chiefly in the form of essays, a form of which he can hardly be called the originator, but which he was one of the first to employ with superior literary effect. Dealing with a wide variety of subject matter, Montaigne has a flexible, easy-going style, comparatively simple in structure and giving currency to much of what was best in the stylistic reforms of the Pléiade. His essays are short discussions of the various aspects of human life as they appealed to him. They are modern in the sense of being thoughtful but not overserious attempts to connect the experience of life with some of the general truths of human nature and of history. They present also the typical essay qualities of digression and pleasant meandering. Indeed, Montaigne carries the informal tendency almost to


Pantagruel.

IESVS MARIA

LES HORRI-
BLES ET ESPOV-
uentables faictz et prouesses
du tresrenõme Pantagruel,
Roy des Dipsodes, Filz du
grãt geant Gargantua, Cõ
pose nouuellement par mai-
stre Alcofrybas Nasier.

¶ Augmẽte & Corrige frai-
chement par maistre Jehan
Lunel docteur en theologie.

M.D.XXXIII.

On les vend a Lyon en la
maison de Francoys Jusic.
Demourant deuant nostre
Dame de Confort

TITLE-PAGE OF ORIGINAL EDITION OF RABELAIS'S "PANTAGRUEL"

excess, presenting very often an almost total lack of connection between subject matter and title. He is frank and at times almost egotistical in tone, and is colored everywhere by a subtle skepticism and irony; but beneath his surface pleasantry he gives utterance to a wisdom that is deep and sound. He exerted a considerable influence on the essayists of the Classical period in England, notably Addison and Steele. Rabelais and Montaigne both stand for a good-natured acceptance of life, but with Rabelais it is an appetite and with Montaigne an amused and skeptical tolerance. The "Do what you will" of Rabelais becomes the "What do I Know?" of Montaigne. Let us take the haphazard jumble we call life with cheerful resignation, says Montaigne, not be overcredulous about the good time coming, and not take ourselves too seriously. Here is a typical sentiment: "He who has neither the courage to die, nor the heart to live, who will neither resist nor fly, what should one do with him?"

Among the other prose writers of the Renaissance one of the most notable was Marguerite d'Angoulême, queen of Navarre. Her poems are not without distinction. She is best known, however, as the author—in part at least—of the "Heptameron," a series of seventy-two tales set in a framework in imitation of Boccaccio but representing a somewhat higher level of life and manners. The Abbé de Brantôme was an interesting retailer of anecdote, with a rather marked preference for the scandalous, but presenting withal a very vivid picture of the society of his times.

From the strictly literary point of view the contribution of the Renaissance period in France was chiefly along the line of the development of style and of type. The looseness and vagueness that had characterized much of the medieval writing gave way to a considerable exactness of vocabulary, the Alexandrine was carried well on its victorious way, the essay came into its own, and lyric forms of great beauty were evolved. More important than all this, however, was the peculiarly Renaissance temper of independence, of scrutiny, of weighing and balancing, and of emphasis on individual judgment rather than authority.

The Great Age

With the seventeenth century we come to what is commonly known as *le grand siècle*, "the great age," of French literature. It was the period of the *grand monarque*, Louis XIV, and of his ministers Mazarin and Colbert; of the Thirty Years' War; of the absolutism that made France the most powerful of the European states, flowering in the splendor of Versailles and the Louvre and ripening after another hundred years in the red flame and the sharp steel of the Revolution. The pendulum of literary history swings in this age from the poetry and independence of the Renaissance to the prose and conformity of a triumphant Classicism.

JEAN DE LA FONTAINE

The Classical period in French literature was the product of many and various forces, but it may be said to have received its immediate impress from the hands of Malherbe and Boileau. Their work is for the most part in verse form, though they can hardly, in any true sense, be called poets. They discuss and exemplify in their work the critical theories for which they stood. What these were, the reader of English literature can readily gather from Pope's "Essay on Criticism." The ideals proclaimed are those of conformity, reason, moderation, and good breeding. The test of excellence is the degree in which a piece of literature conforms to certain authoritative models—chiefly the Latin poets of the Augustan Age. Doubtless the restlessness of the Renaissance

needed the stabilizing discipline of the Classical regimen. What happened was that under its spell lyric poetry, on the one hand, died of anæmia, and tragedy, on the other, rose to the most impressive dignity that it has ever known in France.

The writer who comes nearest to being a poet in this century is **La Fontaine,** author of a series of "Contes," or short tales, drawn largely from the fabliaux and from Boccaccio, and of the "Fables," based on Æsop and his imitators. He is at his best in the latter—graceful, elegant, subtly ironical, revealing the keen eye, the fine candor, and the sparkling narrative style of one who was almost of the elect. He may be said to have given its typical verse form to the animal story and to have recast the uncouth medieval Reynard into a parlor friend.

PIERRE CORNEILLE

The greatness of the *grand siècle* is centered in the splendid triad consisting of Corneille, Racine, and Molière. Based as they were on the regularity and severity of the Senecan model, the tragedies of Corneille and Racine adapted themselves readily to the rules and regulations prescribed by the Classical school.

Pierre Corneille was born in 1606 and died in 1684. His life was long, but so little eventful that the publication dates of his principal plays form its chronicle. Corneille wrote comedy of a very

creditable sort, as is shown in "La Veuve" ("The Widow") and "Le Menteur" ("The Liar"), but his greatness lies in the field of tragedy. Even in his formative period he produced a work—the "Medea"—which was the greatest French tragedy up to its time. We can notice in rapid review only a few of his more important plays. One of the most typical is "Polyeucte," a splendid presentment of the theme of Christian martyrdom.

It is the story of a young Roman of noble birth, who soon after his marriage is converted to the Christian faith. His young wife Pauline urges him without avail to save his life by renouncing his new faith. His death as a martyr has the effect of converting Pauline and her father the governor, who had condemned Polyeucte to death. It is one of the finest of Corneille's plays and one of those most fully representative of his peculiar genius as a dramatist.

"The Cid" is based on the Spanish chronicle play of Castro, but is transformed into a tragedy of exalted dignity. "Horace" is on the theme of patriotism and is one of the best examples of Corneille's method as a dramatist. In "Cinna" the author comes forward as the champion of monarchy. "Rodogune" is a semi-romantic play of great intensity and dramatic force. "Andromeda" is the best example of Corneille's genius in the field of spectacular tragedy. "Œdipus" and "La Toison d'Or" ("The Fleece of Gold") represent his period of decline, but are nevertheless characterized by passages of lofty genius and poetic power. Corneille's tragedies possess an austere dignity of theme and treatment, a kind of sublimity in dramatic characterization, a superb handling of the Alexandrine, and a loyal though not unreasoning acceptance of the Classical unities of structure. In spite of a certain rhetorical quality of style, and monotony and regularity of presentation, he is, as Mr. Saintsbury says, "the greatest tragic dramatist of France on the classical model."

Jean Racine was a younger contemporary of Corneille. He was born in 1639 and died in 1699. He had the advantages of a good education and of the patronage of the king. He was greater as a dramatist than as a man, being of a somewhat jealous and unamiable temper, as shown by various elements of ill nature in his ri-

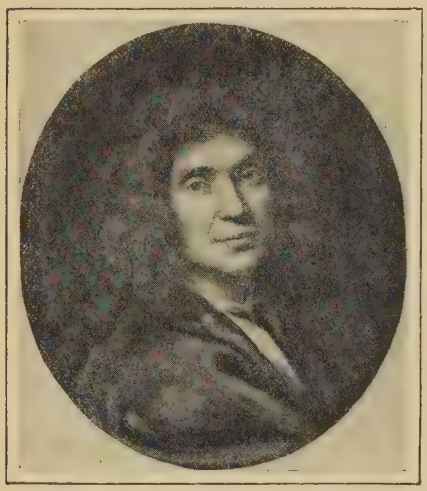
valry with Corneille and his ingratitude for kindness shown him by Molière. His first important play, "Andromaque," was drawn almost directly from Euripides. Says Professor Dowden, "Madame de Sévigné was a devoted admirer of the great Corneille, but when she witnessed his young rival's 'Andromaque,' she yielded to its pathos six reluctant tears." This play marks the passage of French tragedy from the oratorical to the more fundamentally poetic tone which it afterward maintained. "Britannicus," "Bérénice," "Bajazet," and "Mithridates" are from historical and semi-historical sources. In his searching tragedies "Iphigenia" and "Phædra" we find Racine reverting again to Euripides. The latter is by far the greatest of his plays, almost faultless in its expression and superb in the tragic intensity of its central character.

Phædra is the youthful wife whom Theseus has taken in his declining age. She finds herself overcome by a resistless passion for Hippolytus, his son by a former wife. He, however, is a devotee of the goddess Diana and rejects the love of Phædra. Jealousy moves her to lay false charges against Hippolytus. Theseus calls down upon him the vengeance of the gods, and his death follows. Remorse seizes Phædra ; she confesses, and takes her own life. Racine is faithful to his sources so far as narrative is concerned, but gives the theme a modern emphasis by injecting into it the Christian ideas of sin, human weakness, and retributive remorse.

After an interval of eleven years Racine produced his two Biblical tragedies, "Esther" and "Athaliah," the latter a fine combination of beauty and dignity. Racine has less of original power than Corneille, but greater ease and a nearer approach to the human passions, making a much freer use of the love intrigue than does Corneille. Racine's idea can hardly be said to be that of holding the mirror up to nature, but rather of producing tragedies upon the Classical model, which he did supremely well. His genius lies chiefly in his creations of feminine character. In almost all his plays the women are much more important than the men, and it is through them that Racine achieves his high distinction as spokesman of the human emotions.[1]

[1] Perhaps the nearest parallel in English to the French classical tragedy is Addison's "Cato."

Great as are the names of Corneille and Racine in the field of French drama, that of Jean Baptiste Poquelin, called **Molière**, is greater still. And his greatness is all the more remarkable because his plays are comedies, coming from the rather ignoble pedigree of farce and claptrap. Molière was born in Paris in 1622. He received a good education at the famous Jesuit college of Clermont, studied law, and is said to have been called to the bar. His first attempt at organizing a theatrical company was a failure. He persisted, however, in his ambition and for thirteen years toured the provinces with a company the most notable member of which was Madeleine Béjart, who assumed the leading feminine rôle in most of his plays. Upon his return to Paris in 1658 he was honored with the patronage of the king, whom for a while he served as valet de chambre. His marriage to Armande Béjart, sister of his leading actress, was not a happy one. He wrote over thirty-five plays,—some in verse and some in prose,—followed his profession as an actor all through his life, and died in 1673, during a performance of "Le Malade Imaginaire," almost literally with a part upon his lips.



MOLIÈRE

We find back of the laughter of Molière's comedy a penetrating vision of the realities of life and a wisdom that is deep and sometimes almost sad. With "Les Précieuses Ridicules," a one-act satire on the women of the literary coteries of his time, brilliant in its dialogue and searching in its interpretation, Molière came for the first time in a conspicuous way before the public. This was fol-

lowed shortly by the two sparkling comedies "L'École des Maris" ("The School for Husbands") and "L'École des Femmes" ("The School for Wives"). The climax of Molière's dramatic work is marked by "The Misanthrope," a satire of great depth and richness of conception, and "Tartuffe," an incisive arraignment of religious hypocrisy, regarded by many as Molière's greatest play.

Orgon has every confidence in his friend Tartuffe, who has all the external marks of goodness, but who is in reality a most consummate hypocrite. Under the guise of friendship Tartuffe attempts to betray the honor of Elmire, the wife of Orgon, who risks her reputation by leading him on to a humiliating exposure. Orgon, though amazed at his friend's bad faith, suffers himself to be still further duped into loss of his property and final arrest on a false charge of treason—all at the hands of the respectable Tartuffe. At length, upon the intervention of the king, Tartuffe is led away to serve a well-merited term in prison. The satire in this play was so keen as to arouse the bitter resentment of the Church and the court, so that for a while Molière's theater was closed and the royal favor withdrawn.

Within the seven years of life left to him Molière produced "Le Médecin malgré Lui" ("The Physician in Spite of Himself"), a farce comedy based on an old fabliau; "George Dandin," one of the best of his pictures of marital complication; "L'Avare" ("The Miser"), in which bourgeois and provincial life are held up to ridicule; "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme" ("The Tradesman turned Gentleman"), a bold and brilliant satire on the middle-class social climber; "Les Femmes Savantes" ("The Learned Ladies"); "Le Malade Imaginaire" ("The Imaginary Invalid"); and a considerable number of lesser plays.

Molière raised French comedy from the farce and burlesque level to the refined and highly polished form which later generations have come to expect of it. He made it also the vehicle of social reform through the not always gentle art of ridicule. As a poet he is inferior to Corneille and Racine, but rises above them in his appeal to the realities of life and conduct. Indeed, if we leave out of account the poetic element, we shall not go far wrong in naming Molière as the greatest of all writers of comedy.

Other types of literature. French fiction in the seventeenth century was for the most part decidedly below the level of drama. The "Comic Romance," of Paul Scarron, is, however, an excellent specimen of picaresque romance, based on the rogue's novel of Spain. And "The Princess of Cleves," of Madame de la Fayette, though of small bulk, was of great significance as a sympathetic study of character and emotion, the first notable achievement of its kind in France.

In the field of nonfictional prose we must note three great seventeenth-century writers. Blaise Pascal is noted chiefly for his "Pensées" ("Thoughts"), reflections on the conflict between doubt and faith—simple, confident, expressed with a grave sweetness that has proved comforting to many a troubled heart. The Duke de la Rochefoucauld is best known by his "Maxims," a volume of about six hundred short paragraphs or sentences on the ethical aspects of life as the writer saw it—models of clear and direct writing. Dowden says that the "Maxims" read "like a collection of medals struck in honor of the conquests of cynicism." Jean de la Bruyère, in his "Characters," looks with indulgent tolerance on the foibles of life and satirizes them in an easy and graceful style which the English satirists—Addison and his group—were glad to imitate.

A word on the remarkable institution known as the *salon* will not be out of place. It was a little court presided over by a woman of distinction, and devoted to the cultivation of a refined taste and appreciation, to brilliant conversation, to the lionizing of poets and playwrights, to literary coquetry, and to elegance of manners. At its best the *salon* served to encourage literary production and the cultivation of clearness and precision of style. But it often fell into mere triviality and into the ridiculous overrefinement of wire-drawn verbiage known as "preciosity," so keenly satirized by Molière. The *salon* continued to be a feature of literary life in France throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, down to the very days of the Reign of Terror.

The real greatness of the *grand siècle* is centered in a single name —that of Molière. In a less significant way it may be said that the

age was great in the sense of being an age of standards and of conformity to them. Such a régime has its dangers as well as its greatness; we have seen that lyric poetry could not survive the severity of its requirements, and that the garment of artificiality was fitted to almost everything else that it produced. Yet the insistent demand for conscientious workmanship throughout this period gave to French literature some of its most characteristic qualities—precision, refinement of phrase, alertness, elegance, and, above all, transparent clearness; and these are no small gains in the development of a national literature.

The Eighteenth Century

The eighteenth century is a curiously inconsistent age. It presents, on the one hand, a revival of the scientific spirit of the Renaissance, which boldly questioned the right to existence of the social and political institutions of the time, and, on the other, an even greater conformity than that of the seventeenth century to the rigid system of Malherbe and Boileau in the field of literature.

Prose fared somewhat better than poetry in this age. René Lesage is best known for his rogue's novel of "Gil Blas," the hero of which is one of the great characters of world fiction, broadly human in his appeal, affording his creator a fine vantage ground for swift and colorful narrative, and exerting a strong influence on the English novelists Fielding and Smollett.

The hero of this story is a young Spanish orphan, who at the age of seventeen sets out on a mule and with only a few ducats in his pocket, at the bidding of his uncle, for the University of Salamanca, which he never reaches, owing to more important calls upon his time. He becomes for a while apprentice to Dr. Sangrado; he enters the service of the archbishop of Granada; he is taken into the household of a lady of fashion; he consorts with thieves, courtiers, political wire-pullers, strolling actors—in short his school is the world, his education proves to be a wide one, and his lessons are well learned.

The Abbé Prévost produced in "Manon Lescaut" a study in feminine psychology so profoundly sympathetic, so true and simple and

direct, as to deserve the name of masterpiece. Beaumarchais, on the whole perhaps the greatest dramatist of the century, in his brilliant comedies "The Barber of Seville," "The Marriage of Figaro," and "La Mère Coupable" ("The Guilty Mother") has presented a running comment of keen irony upon the times and upon the outlook for the future.

Probably the most significant phenomenon in French literature in the eighteenth century was what is known as the Philosophe movement. The age was marked by a tone of general skepticism and rigid inquiry into the bases of government, social institutions, moral principles, canons of art, and, indeed, practically every manifestation of society. This was the Philosophism of the new age,—the so-called "Illumination" or "Enlightenment." Its tendency was to deism in religion and to materialism in philosophy. Heresy became the fashionable attitude, tempered always, however, with enough conformity to be made comfortable. From the mid-century on, the subject matter of literature was converted largely into a medium for the propaganda of the Philosophe movement.

The two great forerunners of this movement were Voltaire and Montesquieu. François Marie Arouet, who assumed the name of **Voltaire,** was born in 1694 and died in 1778. His life covered thus more than three quarters of the entire century. He received his education at the hands of the Jesuits, whom in his later years he was to attack so bitterly. He was twice imprisoned in the Bastille on account of publications which the Regency found unpalatable. He lived for a while in England, was the friend and companion, at the Prussian court, of Frederick the Great, from whom he afterward became estranged, and passed his closing years on his large estate at Ferney, near the Swiss border.

Voltaire was regarded as the greatest poet of his period—a fact which speaks eloquently of the utter barrenness of the poetic feeling in those times. His epic poems "The Henriade," in honor of Henry IV, and "Pucelle," a contemptible attack on Joan of Arc, together with his numerous shorter poems, are polished and brilliant, but cold and hard and rigidly obedient to the rules of the Classical school. His tragedies—"Zaïre," "La Mort de César" ("The

Death of Cæsar"), "Tancred," and the rest—show a high degree of cleverness and literary craftsmanship, but are as lifeless as his poems. He wrote fiction also—satirical short tales for the most part, the best example being "Candide."

"Candide" is one of a group of stories which Voltaire called "Philosophic Tales," the events being a mere scaffold on which to build an attack upon the shallow optimism of "Whatever is, is right." Candide and his tutor, Pangloss, set out in search of a dearly loved cousin. They are confronted by a world very much out of joint—the horrors of the Lisbon earthquake, famine, plague, human greed and guile, injustice, and a thousand other evils. The cousin when found proves to be a sorry specimen. Candide retreats to the simple life of the country, plants a garden, abjures philosophy, turns a deaf ear to Pangloss's insistence upon the theory of "the best of all possible worlds," and sums up the whole duty of man in the famous phrase "We must stick to our hoeing."

VOLTAIRE

From a statue by Houdon

Voltaire embodies, perhaps more than any other writer, the form and spirit of the eighteenth century—its polish, elegance, correctness, good form, cleverness, irony; its intellectual shallowness, satirical skepticism, irreverence, and comparative lack of imaginative insight. The English poet Alexander Pope presents a very fair reflection of the spirit, tone, and style of Voltaire. To Voltaire's credit it must be said that he was a consistent apologist for reason and an enemy of all dogma that tended to enslave the mind. "Écrasez l'infâme," said he,—"Down with the infamous thing,"—and to him traditional theology, ecclesiasticism, and intolerance were the most infamous of all things. He wrote to a friend, "I wholly disapprove of your ideas, but will defend with my life your right to give expression to them."

Charles, Baron de Montesquieu, was born near Bordeaux in 1689 and died in 1755. He is a much more attractive personality than Voltaire. He has none of Voltaire's theatrical quality, but much of Montaigne's sanity and thoughtfulness. His "Lettres Persanes" ("Persian Letters") are light but keen bits of satire on almost all the national shortcomings. It is, however, as the author of that remarkable work "L'Esprit des Lois" ("The Spirit of the Laws") that Montesquieu is chiefly famous. He thinks of law as a natural outgrowth of physical, especially climatic, conditions, of customs and social forces, and of the general connection of historic movement. His analysis of the English form of government, which he greatly admired, but which, like the majority of even the notable Englishmen of his time, he did not fully understand, had a considerable influence upon the founders of the United States government.

The Philosophe movement proper centers chiefly in the group known as the Encyclopedists. The moving spirit and master workman was **Diderot.** Under his wise and skillful and patient guidance the twenty-year task of creating the "Encyclopedia" was accomplished. It is a vast compendium of the science, politics, economics, industry, technology, and art of the age. It is colored throughout by the rationalist philosophy of the times, but in spite of the serious defects of that system was an achievement of great value and a notable contribution to the development of modern thought. Some of the best work of Diderot is included in the "Encyclopedia," but he wrote widely in other fields. His work is characterized by a thoroughgoing sincerity and devotion to truth as he conceived it and by an easy and spontaneous style. His most conscientious helper on the "Encyclopedia" was D'Alembert, who produced the notable "Preliminary Discourse" and a number of valuable articles, and who was on the whole the most thoroughly intellectual of all the Philosophe writers.

The tremendous upheaval of the Revolution, the most significant social readjustment of modern times, while a product in some slight degree of the literature preceding it, and exerting a profound influence upon that which followed, did not in itself and at the time give

rise to any very notable literary work. We may mention the speculative writings of Saint-Simon and Proudhon, Rouget de Lisle's superb "Marseillaise,"—the most stirring of all national songs,—and the work of the revolutionary orators, especially Mirabeau, Vergniaud, and Danton, whose eloquence often rises to lofty and splendid heights.

We have now to consider the work of a remarkable group of writers who, with the exception of Rousseau, lived through the Revolution, whose work falls partly before and partly after it, and who are commonly classified as novelists, although the fictional element is largely obscured by propaganda of one sort or another. These writers are the forerunners of the great Romantic movement. The most remarkable of them is **Jean Jacques Rousseau.** He was born at Geneva in 1712, was left early without a mother, and received only an irregular schooling. His life was hardly respectable, as the eighteenth century understood that term. It was full of changes and was more or less that of a vagabond. Law student, engraver, footman, musician, tutor, he moved from place to place. He was the protégé of one patron after another—Mademoiselle de Warens, Mademoiselle d'Épinay, the duke of Luxemburg, David Hume, with whom he spent some time in England, and several others. He quarreled with nearly all his patrons and friends, including Diderot. He died under somewhat of a cloud of mystery in 1778, at a home in Ermenonville which had been provided for him by M. de Girardin.

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU

It is, indeed, a strange thing that in this man, almost the exact contemporary of Voltaire, we should find the germ of a revolt that was to obliterate the whole system of authority for which Voltaire

stood in the field of literature. His volume entitled "Confessions" is sometimes called a novel, and, while purporting to be frankly autobiographical, doubtless contains a considerable element of fiction. Professor Dowden remarks of it, "Rousseau writes with all the sincerity of one who is capable of boundless self-deception."

The book was written under the stress of much anxiety and many shifts of fortune, between 1765 and 1770. It purports to be a complete account of Rousseau's life from his childhood on. The love affairs of the author are quite unreservedly set forth. His own shortcomings and those of his intimate friends are frankly laid bare. And in the later portions we find abundant references to supposed enemies and false friends. It is almost impossible to draw the line between fact and fiction in this strange book. Better than the events or supposed events of the narrative are Rousseau's splendid descriptions of natural scenery and his charming bits of rural and peasant atmosphere. The following typical passage of description will illustrate:

"I remember passing one delicious night outside the town, in a road which ran by the side of either the Rhone or the Saône, I forget which of the two. Gardens raised on a terrace bordered the other side of the road. It had been very hot all day, and the evening was delightful; the dew moistened the parched grass, the night was profoundly still, the air fresh without being cold; the sun in going down had left red vapors in the heaven, and they turned the water to rose color; the trees on the terrace sheltered nightingales, answering song for song. I went on in a sort of ecstasy, surrendering my heart and every sense to the enjoyment of it all, and only sighing for regret that I was enjoying it alone."

"Émile," another so-called novel, is the vehicle for Rousseau's natural-development theory of education. "Julie," or "La Nouvelle Héloïse" ("The New Eloise"), reveals Rousseau the moralist, presenting in his heroine the testing and shaping of character through the domestic environment. "Le Contrat Social" ("The Social Contract") is theory pure and simple, without any veil of fiction, and presents Rousseau's solution of the problem of society—in effect the theory of representative democracy. His immense influence on the life and literature of his times lay in the fact of his avowed hostility to conventional standards and his bold attack upon the sanctions of the age. "Man was born free, yet everywhere

he is in chains," said he. "Nature has made him good and happy —society has made him evil and miserable." We must therefore reconstruct society along the lines of natural law, natural impulse, natural right. From the literary point of view Rousseau is significant as an exponent of what has sometimes been called the "sentimental school"—of an emphasis on feeling rather than intellect,

VILLAGE STREET IN BARBIZON, FRANCE

upon humble rather than aristocratic life, and, above all, upon external nature as a living force influencing the soul of man. The finest passages in his various novels are his descriptions of natural scenes and effects. Among the novels produced under the influence of Rousseau we may mention Saint Pierre's "Paul and Virginia," Madame de Staël's "Corinne," and Benjamin Constant's "Adolphe."

François René de Châteaubriand (1768–1848), regarded for some thirty years as the greatest man of letters in France, often referred to by critics as "the father of the Romantic movement," a brooding, melancholy, self-centered, disillusioned dreamer, produced great masses of half-narrative, half-religious writings glorifying the

wilderness and savage life and the primitive Christian faith. "The Genius of Christianity," partly autobiographical and partly art propaganda; "The Martyrs," a rambling narrative of the early days of Christianity; "The Natchez," an almost grotesque idealization of the life of the American Indian; and "Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe" ("Memoirs from Beyond the Tomb"), a volume of self-revelation in much the same spirit as Rousseau's "Confessions"—these are his principal works. Châteaubriand's writings are significant in their note of revolt against the rule of reason and science and in their glowing descriptions of nature, often more richly and vividly colored than those of Rousseau himself.

The eighteenth century is commonly thought of as the most formal of all the periods of French literature, and yet, strangely enough, its significance is rather that of substance than of form. It was a period of the release of great ideas. It was an age of revolt—at first critical and intellectual and later emotional—against the form and pressure of a society that was hastening to a judgment that culminated in the Reign of Terror. And the final phase of the period, the work especially of Rousseau and Châteaubriand, is not only a protest but a prophecy as well, a reflection of the liberating impulse which in the field of literature has come to be known as the Romantic movement.

The Romantic Movement

Before considering Hugo and the high tide of Romanticism we must glance briefly at two or three writers who came between the end of the old movement and the beginning of the new. Pierre Jean de Béranger might be called a belated straggler from the Classical fold except that his poetry is lyrical in a very true sense—including songs of many types and of consummate grace, melody, lightness, and sincerity, such as "Le Grenier" ("The Garret"), "Le Roi d'Yvetot" ("The King of Yvetot"), and "Roger Bontemps" ("Jolly Roger"). Alphonse Prat de Lamartine, on the other hand, is definitely in the line of the Rousseau group, with his exquisite "Meditations," "Harmonies," "Recueillements" ("Recollections")—a poet of rare tenderness, melancholy sweetness, and

fine appreciation of natural beauty. Henri Beyle, known by his assumed name of "Stendhal," is, in his rather confused psychological studies in fiction, somewhat under the influence of Châteaubriand.

Like most tendencies in history, the Romantic movement is a composite of varied and almost contradictory elements. So far as form is concerned, the Romantic school sets its face resolutely against the idea of conformity to models, standards, rules, and regulations. Form and style must vary with the nature of the subject and the mood of the writer. With respect to subject matter, it is the individual that counts rather than institutions, and in this we see the Renaissance idea coming to the front again. However, the supreme thing about the individual is emotion rather than reason; the final reality is that of sentiment, feeling, passion, especially romantic love. There is also the tendency to get far away from the flat and unprofitable present to the mellow charm of the long ago: the "backward look" that dwells so happily upon the medieval period—the age of high adventure, of the mysteries of faith, of the resistless spell of love. This is the conservative tendency in the movement. Closely allied to it is the gaze upon remote and strange places—the Orient, Iceland, haunted ruins, and mountain tops. Also, and equally significant, is the "forward look" to an emancipated race, linking itself politically to republicanism, democracy, and even radical revolt. Something, too, of international friendliness there is, breaking the bonds of a self-satisfied provincialism,—a welcoming of the Spanish ballad, of the Scottish folk song, of the chant of primitive races, of Ossian, Byron, Scott, Goethe. There is also, and perhaps more insistently than all else, the worship of nature, deep, strong, constant—nature which stands always so beautiful to rebuke the baseness of human society.

Victor Marie Hugo was born at Besançon in 1802. Despite his faults, which were not a few, he takes rank as on the whole the greatest literary genius of modern France. His father was an officer in the army of Napoleon, and his mother a woman of strong royalist principles—facts which count for a great deal in an analysis of Hugo's writings. At the early age of seventeen he was a leading contributor to the *Conservateur Littéraire*, an intensely Romantic

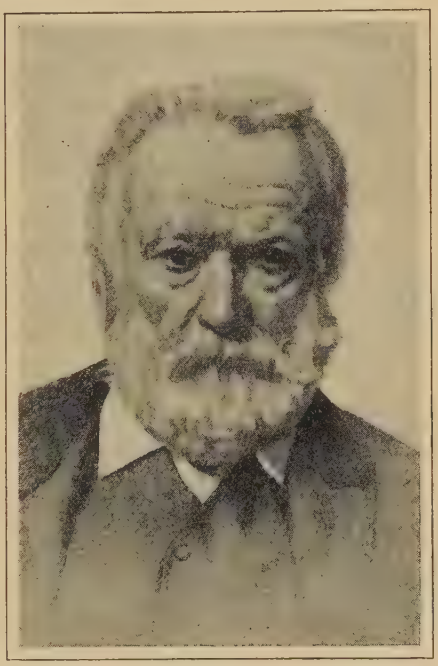
journal. His first attempts at the novel—"Han of Iceland" and "Bug Jargal"—are rather crude and heavy-handed attempts in the Romantic vein. In his early volumes of poetry—"Odes and Ballades" and "Orientales"—he defied practically every canon of the Classical school and became at once the acknowledged leader of the Romanticists. His first important play, "Hernani," almost resulted in a riot when run-on instead of end-stopped lines[1] issued from the mouth of the actor who presented the opening passage. The play is a typical example of romantic love, intrigue, and honor.

Hernani is a noble bandit and a claimant of the throne of Spain. He is in love with the heroine, Doña Sol, whose hand is sought also by two other noble suitors—Gomez, her uncle, and the king, Don Carlos. Hernani is an accidental guest at the castle of Gomez, whose high sense of honor compels him to protect his rival, even to the extent of allowing the king to carry off Doña Sol as an alternative. Hernani in gratitude pledges his life to help Gomez defeat the election of Carlos as Emperor. The project fails, and Carlos, admiring his noble enemy, gives Doña Sol to Hernani. Gomez demands the fulfillment of Hernani's pledge. He drinks the poisoned cup, Doña Sol shares it with him, and Gomez takes his own life.

Hugo's other plays, "Marion Delorme," "Lucretia Borgia," "Le Roi s'Amuse," "Ruy Blas," "Mary Tudor," "The Burgraves," maintain the same high standard of characterization and emotional intensity as "Hernani." Hugo as a dramatist may be criticized for attempting to crowd too much life and action into too small a compass. His plays lack the clearly defined episodic structure and fine centralization of theme of the seventeenth-century drama. They are often faulty in dramatic technique. They are, however, intense, graphic, splendidly poetic, even lyrical in tone, and have a vitality and sweep of movement that is new in dramatic writing. With Hugo's plays should be mentioned the novel "Notre-Dame de Paris" ("The Hunchback of Notre-Dame"), that marvelous recreation of medieval life and spirit, looking backward, as do most

[1] The reader will get a clear idea of the distinction between these two poetic forms by comparing at random a passage from Pope's "Essay on Man" with one from Keats's "Endymion."

of the plays, deep and rich in its handling of the great cathedral as the fitting symbol of the life of that early time. The plays and early novels were succeeded by another outburst of poetic genius in the volumes "Les Voix Intérieures" ("Inner Voices"), "Les Rayons et les Ombres" ("Sunlight and Shadow"), "Les Feuilles d'Automne" ("Autumn Leaves"), "Chants du Crépuscule" ("Twilight Songs"). It is hard not to speak in constantly superlative terms of Hugo's great work as a poet. His poetry gives expression to the soul of nature and of man, in great floods of lofty imagination, glowing description, and ardent emotion. We shall certainly not go wrong in assigning to his work the supreme place in French lyric poetry.



VICTOR HUGO

Hugo's political opinions had been undergoing during these years a development along the line of increasing liberalism, so that Louis Napoleon upon coming into power in 1851 saw fit to send him into exile. He departed in wrath, issuing as he went his satirical prose volume "Napoléon le Petit" ("Napoleon the Little"). He did not see France again for eighteen years. He made his home chiefly on the islands of Jersey and Guernsey. The fruit of his exile appeared in the lyrical poems entitled "Contemplations," in a series of superb narrative poems on historical themes, called "La Légende des Siècles" ("The Legend of the Ages"), and in three great novels,

"Les Misérables," "Travailleurs de la Mer" ("Toilers of the Sea"), and "L'Homme qui Rit" ("The Man who Laughs"). Hugo is probably best known to readers of English by "Les Misérables." It is a novel of very unequal power, consisting of a rather confused mass of scenes, motives, and characters, with much declamatory eloquence and philosophizing. Yet it is a great novel by virtue of the author's intense sympathy with the outcasts and unfortunates of society, of the frequent passages of high narrative and descriptive power to which he rises, and of the vast sweep of his movement, which includes almost the whole of French life from the street gamin Gavroche to the emperor Napoleon. The following is the barest outline of the main action of the story:

The peasant Jean Valjean is condemned to the galleys for stealing bread for his sister's starving children. On gaining his freedom he is befriended by the saintly Bishop Myriel. His rough and hardened nature is touched, and he becomes a changed man—a friend of the poor. He rises to a position of respect and honor as a business man and mayor of the town. At the culmination of his success he learns that a poor, half-witted artisan has been arrested and is charged with being Jean Valjean, the erstwhile convict. To the amazement of the court he presents himself, saying simply, "I am Jean Valjean." This is the crisis of the story. He is sentenced to the galleys again, but escapes, and thereafter lives a fugitive life in the back streets and shabby courts of Paris, shadowed by the relentless police inspector Javert. Little Cosette, illegitimate child of a Paris working-girl, whom he rescues from her cruel foster parents, becomes the idol of his soul, only to be taken away from him in the course of time by her lover Marius. In the Revolution of 1830 Marius is wounded, and Jean Valjean bears him to safety through the underground passageways of the Paris sewer system. The lovers are happily married. The lowly hero, who has given his life for the grief and sin of his little world, finally passes calmly away in the presence of his beloved Cosette and Marius.

In 1870 Hugo returned to Paris, lent his moral support to the Commune of 1871, and for fifteen years more continued his creative work. "Quatre-vingt-treize" ("Ninety-three"), a novel dealing with the Reign of Terror, is, on the whole, of more even excellence than most of his other novels, though it does not rise to the level of

the finest passages in "Les Misérables." A second series of "The Legend of the Ages" and a volume of lyrics entitled "Les Quatre Vents de l'Esprit" ("The Four Winds of the Spirit") are on the same high poetic plane as his earlier work. And in the play "Torquemada," his last work of importance, he returns to Spain, the setting of his first great play, "Hernani." He died in 1885, and in pomp and circumstance his obsequies almost rivaled those of the great Napoleon.

It is hard to read Hugo without a feeling of enthusiastic admiration on the one hand and of frequent irritation on the other. He was an avowed disciple of Châteaubriand, and his works reveal all of Châteaubriand's virtues and failings, even to an insufferable vanity, fostered no doubt by the hero worship of his admirers. He has little sense of measure or proportion. In much of his work, especially his novels, his contrasts are violent. He is sometimes inaccurate as to facts. His imagination overshadows his reason, with a resultant obscurity and confusion. He always takes himself seriously. But, like all men of real genius, Hugo rises so far above his shortcomings that it seems ungracious to mention them. The best of his work, preëminently his poetry, has the power of carrying the reader with it, of the transference of vital emotion from the poet to the reader, which is the final test of all poetic greatness.

Of the remarkable group of Romantic writers of whom Hugo was the center and inspiration we can mention only the most significant. The poems of Alfred de Vigny (1799–1863) have the dignity, delicacy, and statuesque beauty of the Classical ideal, although his vocabulary is largely Romantic. His novels, notably "Cinq-Mars," reveal the influence of Scott but are colored with his own melancholy sentiment. Alfred de Musset (1810–1857) was a poet of high and fine if not original powers, producing lyrics of exquisite sensibility and depth of passion. His short tales are also justly admired—such charming pieces as "Le Merle Blanc" ("The White Blackbird"), "Fréderic and Bernerette," and "Mimi Pinson." Some of his best work is revealed in his delightful comedies, or *proverbes*, as he called them, under such titles as "Il faut qu'une Porte soit Ouverte ou Fermée" ("A Door should be either Open or

Shut"), "On ne Badine pas avec l'Amour" ("Love is not a Matter of Jest"), etc. The work of **Théophile Gautier** (1811–1872) is characterized by fine workmanship, richness of color, and imaginative power. His short poems "Émaux et Camées" ("Enamels and Cameos") are almost perfect in finish, tone, effect, and structure. Here are two stanzas which will exemplify his idea of the poet's art, as well as his own verse technique:

"The gods, too, die, alas;
But deathless and more strong
Than brass
Remains the sovereign song.

"Chisel and carve and file,
Till thy vague dream imprint
Its smile
On the unyielding flint."[1]

Gautier's short stories, dealing with the romantic themes of dream love and reincarnation (such, for example, as "Omphale," "La Morte Amoureuse" ("The Dead Sweetheart"), and "Arria Marcella"), reveal him as a master in this type. The same may be said to a large extent of his novels "Captain Fracasse" and "Spirite." "Mademoiselle de Maupin" is a less conventional portrayal of life; its realism is absolutely frank and unchecked. Gautier exerted a decided influence on nearly all the younger writers of his time.

Among the notable writers of fiction of the time we must reckon also the elder **Dumas** (1802–1870), that strange, wayward, exuberant, half-charlatan romancer, with his negro ancestry, his "fiction factory," his two hundred assistants, and his amazing product of twelve hundred novels. In spite of much contempt from the mouths of the critics, he has held his hosts of readers absorbed by the romantic spell of "The Three Musketeers," "Vingt Ans Après" ("Twenty Years After"), "Le Vicomte de Bragelonne," "The Count of Monte Cristo," and other spirited narratives. Another abundant writer of fiction, though far from the floodgate prodigality of Dumas in her production, was Lucile Aurore Dupin (1804–

[1] Translation by George Santayana.

1876), who wrote under the assumed name of **"George Sand."** Her earlier novels, "Indiana," "Lélia," "Jacques," are in the line of Rousseau and Châteaubriand, presenting the "misunderstood female" and the right of passion,—a right which she herself exemplified in her various affairs of the heart, particularly with Musset and Chopin. Her later stories, such as "André," "Consuelo," and "Jeanine," have a somewhat less personal appeal than her earlier ones. Among the best of her writings are the tales drawn from the peasant life of her native Berri—"La Mare au Diable" ("The Haunted Pool"), "Little Fadette," and "François le Champi."

It is with some hesitation that we place **Honoré de Balzac** (1799–1850) among the Romanticists, although Dowden characterizes him as "a realist attacked by nightmares of romance." His first success came in 1829 with "Le Dernier Chouan" ("The Last of the Chouans"), and within the twenty years between that date and his death he produced over ninety novels and tales. The successive volumes of "The Human Comedy," as Balzac called the series, were so many revelations of a society made base and sordid, as he believed, by the leveling mediocrity of the democratic idea. Balzac's style is often cramped and harsh, but extremely painstaking and in general suited to his material. The "human documents" that he presents cover almost the whole range of motive and sentiment, from the utter baseness of "Cousin Betty" and the coarseness of the "Contes Drôlatiques" ("Droll Stories") to the comparative grace and charm of "Modeste Mignon" and "Séraphita." The best-known of his novels, aside from those just mentioned, are "Eugénie Grandet," "La Recherche de l'Absolu" ("The Search for the Absolute"), "César Birotteau," "Illusions Perdues" ("Lost Illusions"), and the poignantly tragic "Père Goriot."

The last named is the story of a father and his two daughters, whom he dearly loves, and upon whom, like King Lear of old, he bestows his whole wealth, leaving himself only a pittance. The daughters, Anastasie and Delphine, are well married, because so well dowered by their old father, and are a pair of fashionable idlers, spending their father's money while he has to content himself with an occasional fleeting

glimpse of them as they roll by in their carriages. At last he lies dying in a shabby lodging-house, and on the day of his wretched death his two daughters attend a grand ball, sending their empty carriages to help fill out their poor father's funeral.

Balzac had a fine mastery of the short story also, his best work in this form being "La Peau de Chagrin" ("The Wild Ass's Skin"), "Jesus Christ in Flanders," and "The Red Inn."

Balzac grips life at close quarters, writes with tremendous intensity and vitality, and covers an immense and very complex range of life, portraying over two thousand distinct characters, most of them carefully individualized. His purpose was to present a complete view of the society of his times. In this he was not entirely successful. His field is mainly the middle class, and in this class his studies are largely of the meaner and baser types of character. He finds the triumphant prestige of the middle class a deadly blight on all true refinement and beauty. Life under the existing social régime is actuated, as Balzac sees it, only by the baser passions, disguised sometimes by ignorance or hypocrisy. He presents vivid pictures of the fierce struggle, the ruthless success, and the pitiable failure of a society that is base and cruel, but from which there is no escape short of a return to divine right, landed aristocracy, and an established Church. Within the scope of his effort and his view of life, however, it may be questioned whether France has yet produced a greater novelist than Balzac.

Prosper Mérimée (1803–1870) wrote a small number of tales and short novels of very high artistic quality, the best known of which are "Colomba," "Mateo Falcone," "La Double Méprise" ("The Double Blunder"), "Arsène Guillot," and "Carmen"—the last a study in feminine psychology and motive happily characterized by Sainte-Beuve as "the Manon Lescaut of our century." Mérimée was a man of the world, refined, sensitive, scholarly, composed, almost cynical, distrusting enthusiasm, and writing with an affected indifference to style but really with the most painstaking care. His prose, like Gautier's, exhibits an approach to that of the best seventeenth-century writers. His tales are little masterpieces of psychological insight, with an undercurrent of rather bitter irony.

Mérimée presents the extreme thinness of the veneer of our civilization, wherein the beast plays so large a part.

Drama in the Romantic period is not so significant a form as poetry or fiction. Some of the best dramatic work of the time was done by writers in these other fields; for example, Hugo and Musset. Of the playwrights proper, Eugène Scribe, Émile Augier, the younger Dumas, and Victorien Sardou occupy the most important places.

It is hard to estimate the value of the Romantic school. It was characterized by much sound and smoke, by a kind of boisterous and sometimes childish outpouring of unregulated feeling, by much that was shallow and careless. It performed an absolutely necessary work, however, in breaking the bonds of a tradition which had once been vital but which had become deadening; and even if, as in all historic movements, the pendulum swung too far, we must be grateful for the impetus behind it.

Baudelaire and the Parnassians

Three poets who are often referred to as of the school of Gautier were Baudelaire, De Banville, and Leconte de Lisle. **Pierre Charles Baudelaire** (1821–1867) was far and away the most important of the three and should perhaps be named, after Hugo, as the greatest poet of the century. He was one of the earliest of the foreign admirers of Edgar Allan Poe. His poems, among them "Les Fleurs du Mal" ("Flowers of Evil") and "Petits Poèmes en Prose" ("Little Poems in Prose"), have much of the mystery and vivid sensuousness of the best work of Poe, and are marked by lofty passion, high idealism, and masterly psychological insight. Baudelaire was the forerunner of the group known as the Parnassians, whose work falls chiefly in the last two decades of the nineteenth century.

The theory of the Parnassians was "art for art's sake,"—suggesting a delight in the perfect appropriateness of form to matter. They cultivated the more subtle and complex emotions, rather than the didactic and obvious ones that had too largely contented the Romantic school. The greatest name of the Parnassian group is that

of **Paul Verlaine** (1844–1896). His tendency is decidedly away from the commonplace and obvious toward "nuances"—subtle and fragile and tenuous adumbrations of reality—and toward a much freer handling of rhythm and cæsura than had been known before. His best passages rise to unparalleled melody and sweetness of tone. His justly famous "Chanson d'Automne" ("Autumn Song") is a good example:

"When a sighing begins
In the violins
Of the autumn-song,
My heart is drowned
In the slow sound,
Languorous and long.

"Pale as with pain,
Breath fails me when
The hour tolls deep.
My thoughts recover
The days that are over,
And I weep.

"And I go
Where the winds know,
Broken and brief,
To and fro,
As the winds blow
A dead leaf."[1]

The Naturalists

With **Gustave Flaubert** (1821–1880), by far the greatest of the novelists of the Second Empire, we come to a remarkable writer who has been claimed by both the Realists and the Romanticists. Flaubert's Romanticism lies in his reaction against what he thought the hopelessly trivial and petty society of his times. His Realism or Naturalism, on the other hand, lies in his extremely objective treatment of life, his so-called "surgical method" of character analysis.

[1] Translation by Arthur Symons.

His best-known novel, "Madame Bovary," is just such a calmly dispassionate analysis of a hopelessly commonplace character in a hopelessly commonplace environment. In "Salammbô" and "The Temptation of Saint Anthony," as well as in his masterly short tales, we find the same note of the uselessness of the struggle against a deadening environment of mere bargain-counter motives. Flaubert's work was not great in quantity and is somewhat depressing in theme, but is marked by fine imagination, keen insight into the types of character presented, subtle mingling of irony and poetic feeling, and conscientious care in the matter of artistic style.

Another novelist who has sometimes been claimed by the Naturalistic camp, but whose elements of difference are more numerous than his points of community with that school, is **Alphonse Daudet** (1840–1897). He is psychological rather than "surgical" and photographic. He is fanciful and appreciative rather than cynical. Eager and vivacious if not subtle in his presentation of life, he reveals himself as a delighted observer of all its manifestations. He is, moreover, singularly void of offense in either treatment or subject. His power of characterization and of narrative technique deepens with the successive volumes of his Parisian novels, among which are "Jack," one of the first conscientious studies of the artisan class in France; "The Evangelist," a keen rebuke to all hypocrisy and religious cant; and "Sapho," a sympathetic treatment of the theme of the wayward woman. In these novels the quality of pathos and tenderness prevails; but in the three "Tartarin" novels we have Daudet as the inimitable ironist, making good-natured fun of the typical Frenchman of the South, whom he knew so well. Daudet was one of the best short-story writers of France. "La Belle Nivernaise" and the charming story of child life entitled "Le Petit Chose" ("Little What's-His-Name") are typical of his work in this field. His volume of miscellaneous prose sketches, "Lettres de mon Moulin" ("Letters from my Mill"), is perhaps the most satisfying picture of Provençal life that has ever been drawn. Daudet's style at its best is almost above praise. "He was an impressionist painter," says Mr. Gosse, "the colors on whose

palette were words of an indescribable abundance, variety, and exactitude." Hence Daudet's work is likely to survive.

Realism undertakes to find artistic significance in the humbler walks of life. Naturalism is a kind of exaggerated Realism, which seeks chiefly to reveal, by exact observation and scrupulous analysis of the forces at work, the effect on character of environment—usually a sordid, wretched, and vicious environment. Many readers are repelled by what they have come to consider the typically unsavory quality of French fiction. Of course it is true that the Naturalistic novel with its "anatomical" method and "documented" material will sometimes be disturbing reading. The question of the extent to which a writer is justified in drawing upon the disagreeable is simply a question of the presence of the higher impulse or motive actuating his work. And it must be admitted that French Realistic fiction is too often characterized, as one of the critics puts it, by an evident desire "to mention the unmentionable with as much fulness of detail as possible." This, however, is not the whole story. In spite of much that one might wish otherwise, the Naturalistic writers have made a contribution of real value to the literature of France.

Jules de Goncourt (1830–1870) and his brother **Edmond** (1822–1896), in their collaborated series of novels and in the journal which they published, deliberately assumed the task of propaganda for the new movement. They undertook to be "modern" both in subject matter and in style. Their best-known novel, "Germinie Lacerteux," marks the first determined insistence upon the social outcast as proper material for fiction. As to style, the Goncourts certainly achieved a form that was original, flexible, and striking, but often so bizarre and grotesque as to suggest affectation. Other novels by these brothers are "Sister Philomène," "Renée Mauperin," and "Madame Gervaisais."

Émile Zola (1840–1902) is the principal exponent of the Naturalistic theory of fiction, and has been the target of much critical praise and blame. Possibly his vision was limited,—most of us believe that there are beautiful as well as ugly things in life,—but we must admit that the novels of Zola are a striking indictment of the

blind and brutal undercurrent of the civilization that we are so ready to glorify. His principal work is the group of over twenty novels, known, from the names of the two leading families involved, as the "Rougon-Macquart" series. The most important titles are "Thérèse Raquin," the prelude to the group; "L'Assommoir," a study of the Paris drinking-shops; "Nana," of the houses of ill fame; "La Bête Humaine" ("The Human Beast"), of the railways; "Germinal," of the mines; "La Terre" ("The Soil"), of the peasantry; "La Débâcle," of the catastrophe of 1871; and "Lourdes" and "Rome," of aspects of the Catholic faith.

GUY DE MAUPASSANT

Guy de Maupassant (1850–1893) was a disciple of Flaubert, with whom in his earlier years he was in intimate touch, and whom he always regarded as his master in the art of composition. Maupassant in his young manhood gave himself freely to the zest of life with an energetic and eager abandon, but little by little he became oppressed by the terrible nearness and mystery of death and by the futility of struggle against the vague but relentless forces of life. The pessimism of these years deepened finally into the insanity which overhung the closing years of his short career. He was an adherent of the Naturalistic school, but achieved a compactness, lucidity, and appropriateness of style to which Zola and the Goncourts never attained. His half-dozen novels, among them "Une Vie" ("A Life"), "Mont-Oriol," "Pierre and Jean," and "Fort comme la Mort" ("Strong as Death"), present life as a tragic and hopeless tangle of frustrated hope, disillusion, futile effort, accident, and misunderstanding. The same pessimism colors his two hundred or more short

stories, though perhaps in somewhat lesser degree. He is commonly regarded as the greatest modern master of the short story. A few of his important stories in this form are "Mademoiselle Fifi," "La Parure" ("The Necklace"), "La Ficelle" ("The Piece of String"), "Clair de Lune" ("Moonlight"), "Petit Soldat" ("Little Soldier"), "The Heritage," and "Yvette." Lafcadio Hearn says of him that he has "the art of creating emotion in the reader's mind by suppressing it altogether in the narrative"—a power which he calls "the supreme art of Realism."

Quite apart from the Naturalistic current stand the highly wrought descriptive novels of Julien Viaud, who wrote under the pen name of "Pierre Loti"—especially "Mon Frère Yves" ("My Brother Yves"), "Madame Chrysanthemum," and "Le Pêcheur d'Islande" ("The Iceland Fisherman"). His volumes of travel, particularly in oriental lands, are unsurpassed in varied range of descriptive effect.

Historians and Critics

The limited scope of our survey allows only a mere mention of the great nineteenth-century historians Michelet, Guizot, Thiers, and Augustine Thierry; of Auguste Comte, the exponent of the positivist system of philosophy; and of Ernest Renan, one of the greatest stylists in French literature and one of the first writers to apply the rationalist method in the treatment of the historical development of religion. In the field of criticism the name of **Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve** (1804–1869) stands easily first. The critic, says he, must first rid himself of all provincial intolerance by wide and sympathetic reading, and then judge of the work in hand on the basis of the measure in which the writer has accomplished the purpose which he set for himself. Sainte-Beuve's achievement amounted to no less than an entire reconstruction of the science of criticism. His works consist of essays contributed to various journals and later collected and issued in volumes entitled "Literary Criticisms and Portraits," "Contemporary Portraits," and "Monday Chats" ("Causeries du Lundi"). In the field of criticism we

must mention also Hippolyte Adolphe Taine, who developed Sainte-Beuve's theory into a method of materialistic determinism,—explaining genius in terms of climatic and economic environment,—and Edmond Scherer and Ferdinand Brunetière, sound and penetrating critics but rather severely conservative in their attitude.

Recent and Contemporary Writers

We are now to make a very brief survey of the recent and contemporary literature of France. With respect to poetry the Parnassians were succeeded by a group representing the Neo-Romantic, or Symbolist, movement—subjective, almost mystical in many instances, reflecting the experience of the soul through the use of material phenomena. The earliest notable exponent of the movement was Stéphane Mallarmé (1842–1898), whose strangely haunting harmonies of verse—such, for instance, as his "L'Après-midi d'un Faune" ("A Faun's Afternoon")—are a bewildering combination of musical sound and obscured meaning. Following in his wake we may note Albert Semaine, whose poems present exquisite symbols of vague and fleeting emotion; Jean Moreas, whose poetry moved Anatole France to call him "the Ronsard of Symbolism"; and Henri Régnier, perhaps the most typical of the Symbolists, whose poems have the alluring sound of Greek lyrics touched by mysticism. Some of the contemporary exponents of what has been called the "new poetry" movement are Francis Jammes, Paul Fort, André Spire, René Arcos, Jules Romaine, Charles Vildrac, and Georges Duhamel. It is probably too soon to estimate the place of these poets in the literature of France, or even to determine their direction, but they are at one in their subjectivity and in their rejection of conventional verse form. A few lines from Vildrac's poem "An Inn" will illustrate French *vers libre* as employed by a typical exponent:

> "It is an inn there is
> At the cross-roads of Chétives-Maisons,
> In the land where it is always cold.

"Two naked highroads cross.
They never saw the garnering of harvests;
They go beyond the sky-line, very far.
They are the cross-roads of Chétives-Maisons.

"There are three cottages,
In the same corner cowering, all the three;
Two of them are uninhabited.

"The third one is this inn with heart so sad.
They give you bitter cider and black bread;
Snow wets the weeping fire; the hostess is
A forlorn woman with a smile so sad."[1]

Symbolism has made relatively little headway in French drama, the only Symbolist writer of note in this field being Edmond Rostand (1868–1918). He came into popular favor with his first play, "Les Romanesques" ("The Romancers"), and his later dramas have added steadily to his reputation. Most of his plays are in Alexandrine verse form and reveal a glowing and richly colored poetic imagery. "La Princesse Lointaine" ("The Far-Away Princess"), "Cyrano de Bergerac," "L'Aiglon" ("The Eaglet"), and "Chanticler" are among his most important plays. The "new drama" in France has followed largely in the wake of the Naturalistic novel. Henri Becque led the way in "Les Corbeaux" ("The Crows") and other plays—penetrating studies in character and social forces. His work was followed by the somber psychological studies of François de Curel, such as "The Fossils," his best play; by the trenchant onslaughts of Eugène Brieux upon various aspects of social maladjustment, best known to American playgoers by "La Robe Rouge" ("The Red Robe") and "Les Avariés" ("Damaged Goods"); and by the fine technique and intense moral impact of certain plays of Paul Hervieu, such as "La Course du Flambeau" ("The Trail of the Torch").

In the field of fiction the writers are legion. The novels of Paul Bourget include a number of conscientious character studies, such as "The Disciple" and "Cosmopolis." Maurice Barrès, a writer of

[1] Translation by Jethro Bithell.

serious purpose and admirable national spirit, has given us some fine work in "The Enemy of the Laws" and "The Friendships of France." Marcel Prévost is a less intense Maupassant, revealing something of the same pessimism in his short stories and novels.

Jacques Anatole Thibaut (1844–1924), writing under the assumed name of **"Anatole France,"** at the time of his death regarded as the greatest contemporary man of letters in his country, was a critic and novelist of rare excellence and a friend and counselor of his people in the troublous times when doubt was heavy upon their hearts. He insists upon no theory or system, is not hasty to denounce, and reveals a seasoned judgment that goes deep into the heart of things. He produced a considerable number of novels. One of the earliest and most popular is "The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard," the story of a kind-hearted savant and his unselfish befriending of the daughter of an old sweetheart. Among France's other novels are "Thaïs," "Les Dieux ont Soif" ("The Gods are Athirst"), "The Opinions of Jerome Coignard," and "L'Anneau d'Améthyste" ("The Amethyst Ring"). He has succeeded, in his happy, quiet, whimsical, gently ironical way, in capturing the spirit of past times, especially of the Middle Ages, to a higher degree of artistic perfection than almost any other of his countrymen. France's irony, says Mr. Gosse, is a "tender and consolatory raillery, based upon compassion."

Romain Rolland (1866–) stands, in these days of national hostility and suspicion, for a broad and deep internationalism and a devotion to spiritual rather than material values as the hope of the human race. It is as the author of the huge novel "Jean-Christophe" that he has made his strongest appeal. Published the year before the outbreak of the World War, it presents the life history of a German idealist, whose lot is cast largely in Paris; and through that experience are reflected the spiritual life and hope of Europe and, indeed, of the modern world. The same high and generous insistence upon spiritual values is the inspiration of his later volume of essays, "Au-dessus de la Mêlée" ("Above the Battle"). "There is but one heroism in the world," says Rolland, "—to see the world as it is, and to love it."

Although not Frenchmen, Maeterlinck and Verhaeren have employed the French language in all their writings and may therefore stand as a sort of Belgian postscript to this survey of French literature. **Maurice Maeterlinck** (1862–) is one of the most significant figures in the Symbolist movement. His Symbolist plays present a minimum of action and a maximum of atmosphere—strange cadences of dialogue, movement, grouping—presentments of hope deferred, of faith decayed, of death the near neighbor, of fate in the corridor and at the door. This series includes eleven plays, the most important being "Pelléas and Mélisande," "L'Intruse" ("The Intruder"), "Les Aveugles" ("The Blind"), and "Sister Beatrice." Maeterlinck turned later to the conventional drama and produced three plays,—"Monna Vanna," "Mary Magdalene," and "The Blue Bird,"—which, although they have met with considerable popularity on the stage, hardly rise to the level of his earlier work either in form or substance.

Émile Verhaeren (1855–1916) is the greatest of recent Belgian poets, as Maeterlinck is of writers of rhythmical prose. In the volumes entitled "Toute la Flandre" ("All Flanders") he presents a series of vivid pictures of the Belgian landscape and aspects of Belgian life. In "Les Campagnes Hallucinées" ("The Transformed Countrysides") and "Les Villes Tentaculaires" ("The Tentacled Cities") he reflects in intense, virile, impetuous free verse the significance of the evolution from a quiet agricultural régime in Belgium to a grinding, clashing, industrial one. He rises perhaps to his climax of enthusiastic acceptance of the fullness of life, with all its joy and grief, in the wonderful volumes entitled "Tumultuous Forces," "The Multiple Splendor," and "Sovereign Rhythms." "Belgium's Agony" is his cry of pain at the desolation of his country wrought by the war; and yet, in the very midst of the conflict, he reveals in "Parmi les Cendres" ("Among the Ashes") a renewal of faith in human life and in the restoration of his beloved land. Verhaeren's poetry stands for the insistent courage of a man among men, of one who refuses to be disheartened and who believes that the forces of life have a rightful claim upon our loyalty.

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Translations:

Everyman's Library contains many French classics in English. E. P. Dutton & Company; send for list.
Foreign Classics for English Readers includes ten French authors. J. B. Lippincott Company; send for list.
Modern Library includes certain French authors. Boni & Liveright.
Lucas's "A Book of French Verse." Oxford University Press.
Thorley's "Fleur-de-Lys, An Anthology of French Poetry." Houghton Mifflin Company.
Modern Book of French Verse. Boni & Liveright.
Carrington's "Anthology of French Poetry," 10th to 19th centuries. Oxford University Press.
Little French Masterpieces (6 vols.) includes six French short-story writers. G. P. Putnam's Sons.
Butler's "Tales from the Old French." Houghton Mifflin Company.
Song of Roland (Butler). Houghton Mifflin Company.

Aucassin and Nicolette and other French medieval romances (several editions obtainable).
Rabelais. J. B. Lippincott Company; and others.
Montaigne. Houghton Mifflin Company; and others.
Molière. The Macmillan Company; G. P. Putnam's Sons; and others.
Rousseau. J. B. Lippincott Company; and others.
Hugo. Thomas Y. Crowell Company; and others.
Dumas. Little, Brown and Company; and others.
Balzac. Little, Brown and Company; and others.
Sainte-Beuve. George Routledge & Sons.
Zola. The Macmillan Company; and others.
Rostand (several editions).
Anatole France. John Lane Company.
Maeterlinck. Dodd, Mead & Company.

Suggested Topics

Aspects of life in medieval France.
The "Song of Roland."
A study of French medieval romances.
The French and the English conceptions of chivalry—a comparison.
Beginnings of the drama in France.
Essence of the Classical ideal.
French Classical tragedy.
Molière as man and writer.
A study of Molière's "Tartuffe."
Voltaire's contribution to the world.
The "Confessions" of Rousseau.
The Revolution and its bearing on literature.
A character study of Jean Valjean in "Les Misérables."
Hugo and other masters of French verse.
The Romantic movement—its meaning and its effect.
The Naturalistic school of fiction.
Some French short-story writers and their work.
French literature of the World War.

CHAPTER IX

GERMAN LITERATURE

The consideration of German history and literature discloses a record of progress, genius, and achievement, leading up to the organization of one of the chief states of Europe, a powerful and unified, though somewhat arrogant, empire. In due course came August, 1914, an epochal date in Germany as elsewhere, ushering in profound changes in government, in the life of the people, and in currents of thought. However, our present chapter has to do not with the events of the years of war nor with conjectures as to the future, but with the more significant currents of German life and letters of the past.

The German race and language. Long before the Christian Era the Germanic tribes, a branch of the Indo-Europeans, settled in the north-central portion of Europe. Their kinsfolk, the Celts, went farther west, while the Slavs settled to the east. The oldest form of the Gothic tongue, common to all the Germanic peoples, still exists in a most interesting document, Bishop Ulfilas' translation of the Bible, made in the fourth century and preserved in part to our own day. Even earlier than that, however, there were various dialects in current use. To the north the Scandinavian language was being formed. High German, spoken in the highlands of southern Germany, had two main elements, Frankish and Swabian; while Low German, the speech of the lower lands more to the north and west, was the basis of Anglo-Saxon, Frisian, Flemish, and Dutch. We cannot enter into these matters very elaborately, but it is important to remember that the German language is related to the languages of these other peoples, and that High German itself had several periods: the Old, Saxon in type, flourishing until 1050 or 1100, the time of the Crusades; the Middle, existing from that time until the Reformation; and the Modern, the literary and ordinary speech of

Germany, continuing until our day, a union of the current dialects of Luther's time—a vigorous language which Luther himself was largely instrumental in fixing permanently. "I have not," wrote Luther, "a distinct, particular, and peculiar kind of language, but I use the common German language in order that the inhabitants of both the upper and the lower counties may understand me."

German is the speech of Germany, of Luxemburg, of Austria, and of the larger part of Switzerland. It is spoken by about eighty million people. Like English it has taken over many Latin and French words. It has retained—as the English language, generally speaking, has not—its early unaccented word endings, which give it on the whole a greater freedom in its poetry. German prose has never been, however, as flexible a mode of expression as English. Long, polysyllabic words and involved sentences are common. It was Mark Twain, we believe, who complained that Schiller wrote his "History of the Thirty Years' War" between the two parts of a German verb! The histories of Niebuhr and Mommsen, the philosophical writings of Kant and Hegel, and the criticism of Lessing and Herder are all, in general, less attractive as literature than similar French and English works. The German people have excelled, however, in their folklore and fairy stories, or märchen.

Certain German traits seem to be characteristic. The German has a strongly sentimental and romantic vein; he is a lover of nature and of music. When the Roman Tacitus described the early Germanic tribes, he told of their battle songs and hymns, which were sung in chorus. All through their history the lyric impulse has been strong, as witnessed by songs, patriotic and love poems, nature lyrics, and hymns. The German is also keenly intellectual and has a veritable passion for philosophical thought. In his mental processes he is apt to be deliberative and methodical, with a tendency to go to the bottom of things and to say the last word. Though not ordinarily original, he is a patient investigator. German learning explores all fields,—art, criticism, history, philosophy, science, religion,—generally without brilliance, but always with thoroughness.

Of English interpreters of German literature Coleridge and Carlyle were among the earliest and most influential.

The Early Period

We must think of the Germanic tribes as hardy, resourceful, warlike, and independent, and as extending from the land of the Vikings at the north to the northern limits of the Roman Empire at the south. The central European peoples shared the religious and mythological ideas of their northern kinsfolk. Christianity was generally accepted, however, in Germany before Charlemagne's time, and the Northern gods were abandoned. It was not so easy, on the other hand, to relinquish a belief in primitive superstitions and magic, in elves, wood sprites, and dwarfs. The German has always felt at home in this strange world, and in our own day sees nothing especially incongruous, for example, in the material of such a play as Hauptmann's "The Sunken Bell."

The earliest literature was not written literature and has therefore not been preserved. It apparently dealt with mythological themes and with heroic stories, the heritage of centuries of conflict. Back of the rude alliterative poems which were handed down orally from generation to generation were legendary tales and also a certain amount of authentic history. The latter had mainly to do with the migrations of Germanic tribes, with the Burgundian kingdom on the Rhine near Worms, with King Attila and his terrible horde of Huns who swept across Europe in the middle of the fifth century, and with Theodoric the Ostrogoth and his victory over Odoacer in 489 at Verona. After the lapse of centuries exact chronology was forgotten, the heroes were all grouped in one generation, Attila became Etzel, Gundahari the Burgundian became King Gunther, and Theodoric of Verona became Dietrich of Bern. This brings us to the earliest undoubted works of literature in German.

The "Hildebrandslied." A sixty-nine line fragment written at the end of the eighth century but having to do with a period about two hundred years earlier, the "Hildebrandslied" (or the "Lay of Hildebrand"), is an interesting example of the once numerous popular epics of Germany. Hildebrand, master-at-arms of Dietrich, returning from years of sojourn among the Huns, meets in single combat the champion of an opposing host, who unexpectedly proves

to be his own son. "'O mighty God,' cries Hildebrand, 'a drear fate happens. Sixty summers and winters, ever placed by men among the spearmen, I have so borne myself that bane got I never. Now shall my own child smite me with the sword, or I be his death?'" The "Hildebrandslied" is human in spirit, strictly alliterative in form, and written in a mixture of High and Low German dialect.

The "Nibelungenlied." Much more important is the noble and complete epic poem written in Middle High German in the early thirteenth century by an unknown poet gifted with imagination and power. The "Nibelungenlied" is a composite German version of the heroic tales that are to be found also in the Icelandic Eddas and in the Norse "Volsunga Saga." The poem contains about ten thousand lines in four-line stanzas and is divided into thirty-nine adventures. An idea of the strength and ruggedness of the original and of its metrical form may be gained from the first two stanzas, here given with Carlyle's very exact translation:

"Uns ist in alten maeren Wunders vil geseit,
Von helden lobebaeren Von grozer chuonheit;
Von vrouden und hoch-geziten, Von weinen und von chlagen,
Von chuner rechen striten, Muget ir nu wunder hören sagen.

"Es wühs in Burgonden Ein vil edel magedin,
Das in allen landen Niht schoners mohte sin:
Chriemhilt was si geheien, Si wart ein schone wip;
Darumbe müsen degene Vil verliesen den lip."

"We find in ancient story Wonders many told,
Of heroes in great glory With spirit free and bold;
Of joyances and high-tides, Of weeping and of woe,
Of noble Recken striving, Mote ye now wonders know.

"A right noble maiden Did grow in Burgundy,
That in all lands of earth Naught fairer mote there be,
Kriemhild of Worms she hight, She was a fairest wife;
For the which must warriors A many lose their life."

The scene is laid among Kriemhild's Burgundian kinsmen on the Rhine; in the Netherland region where the hero Siegfried lived; in

Iceland, where Siegfried went to aid King Gunther, the brother of Kriemhild, in gaining the warrior princess Brunhild as his wife; and in Hungary, the home of Kriemhild after Siegfried's death. It is a story of the elemental passions of jealousy, hatred, and revenge, leading to the extinction of the powerful Burgundians. Purely pagan in its point of view, it shows no trace of Christianity beyond a few formal observances. Over the tale brood fatalism and woe, almost from the first words. Yet the glimpse which we have of Siegfried—courageous, handsome, good-natured, of divine lineage, the slayer of the dragon, the possessor of the sinister hoard, or treasure, of the Nibelungs—is singularly engaging. Kriemhild herself, undeniably the central figure, is the worthy choice of a hero. Her loyal affection for Siegfried and her tragic fortunes alike blind us to the unlovely traits in her character. Brunhild is less a Valkyrie and less a prime mover of events than in the Norse version of the story. Hagen, the vassal of King Gunther and the slayer of Siegfried, grows in strength as the tale advances, and at the close Kriemhild and he stand over against each other, deadly enemies, alike doomed to destruction—two striking epic figures. The poem contains unforgetable scenes: Siegfried's first meeting with Kriemhild; the trial of skill between Gunther, assisted by Siegfried, and the almost superhuman Brunhild; the quarrel of the two proud queens before the minster at Worms; the stealthy doing to death of Siegfried; and the last, greatest scene of all, in which Etzel and Dietrich are reluctantly drawn into the struggle and assist in the overthrow of the Burgundians and the final vengeance of Kriemhild. The reader will not, however, be content with this piecemeal account. There are several spirited verse and prose translations. Carlyle's essay on the "Nibelungenlied" brings back the atmosphere of the old poem in a marvelous way and is shot through with the genius and poetic appreciation of Carlyle himself.

Other heroic material. There is other interesting medieval epic material to be found in the "Heldenbuch," or "Book of the Heroes," a collection made at the command of Emperor Maximilian I (1459–1519). One of the poems included is the fragment of the "Hildebrandslied," already mentioned; another is an epic of over

twenty-four hundred lines, entitled "The Great Rose Garden," allied in its subject matter to the "Nibelungenlied." The most valuable item in the collection is "Gudrun," an epic of about sixty-eight hundred lines, written about 1210. It groups together several stories—stories of the north German coast and of sea voyages and adventures. The character of Gudrun herself displays real heroism, fortitude, and devotion. Less powerful and artistic than the "Nibelungenlied," "Gudrun" is decidedly more pleasing in its material.

Court epic and medieval romance. The second general group of poems coming from the early period of German literature consists of court epics, whose themes were borrowed partly from the cycle of stories concerned with King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. They impress the reader as less original than the epics of the old Germanic heroes. They were preceded by epics based upon the stories of the Æneid, the Trojan War, and Ovid's "Metamorphoses," strangely transformed to exhibit the ideals of the Middle Ages. The Arthurian romances were handled chiefly by three South Germans. Hartmann von Aue, the first of these, born about 1170, was a Swabian, the vassal of a nobleman. Two of his epics are Arthurian, another gives the legend of Saint Gregory, and a fourth, esteemed as his best, is a tale from the Latin, "Der Arme Heinrich." This tale is retold in Longfellow's "Golden Legend." The second and most conspicuous of these court epic poets, Wolfram von Eschenbach, was a gifted, original, and high-principled man. He was born, probably in Bavaria, about 1165. A poor vassal, without school education and unable, as he tells us, to read or write, he was nevertheless undoubtedly a poet of high order. "Parzival," his great epic poem, composed early in the thirteenth century, deals with the legend of the Holy Grail and contains, in all, about twenty-five thousand lines. Adventure, the chief impulse of other medieval romances, is here strictly subordinated to character development and the deepening and perfecting of the spiritual life. Parzival, beset by doubt, discouragement, and trial, is victorious through his purity of spirit and confidence in God. It is a noble poem, the finest of

all the poems of chivalry. Gottfried von Strassburg, the third court epic poet, was, like his predecessors, untitled, but probably well educated. His only epic, "Tristan und Isolde," unfinished at his death, was written about 1210. It is an involved story of adventure, love, revenge, and tragic death, with most of its scenes in Cornwall, in southwest England.

It will be recalled that Wagner, the great German composer, utilized the themes of these medieval romances in his music dramas "Parsifal" and "Tristan und Isolde." His tetralogy, "Der Ring des Nibelungen," is based mostly on the Norse rather than on the German version of the story of the Nibelungs.

Minnesong, Mastersong, and Folk Song

In the consideration of the German lyric it will be necessary to retrace our steps for a moment. A number of Old Saxon and Frankish religious pieces have been preserved dating back as far as the ninth century. These are, however, inferior to the contemporary French and English product. There are curious breaks in the continuity of German literature. Almost nothing, for example, comes from the tenth and eleventh centuries. In the succeeding century many religious legends and secular romances in verse appear, and the early thirteenth is, as we have seen, the period of the heroic epics and the court epics. This century, ushered in so auspiciously, is also the era of the minnesingers. By the term "minnesong" is signified properly "love song," or, in an even more restricted sense, the song of the poet in homage or service to his lady. Provençal or French types gave the German poets their models, but considerable originality was soon displayed, and the range of the poems is one of their chief charms. Lyrics of various kinds, including those of love, nature, politics, and religion, are included. The number of minnesingers was very large, for songs by at least one hundred and sixty of them are extant today. Generally speaking, they belonged to the lower nobility, and their songs were intended to be sung in court to tunes composed by the poets themselves. The common form of the

poem consisted of three stanzas, the first two giving the theme and the third the conclusion. A marked characteristic was sincerity. The poems set forth simple and real human affection, ardent love of nature and of God, and true patriotism. They began to appear as early as 1160; by the thirteenth century they were at their best. Western Germany, Alsatia, Switzerland, and Thuringia all contributed well-known minnesingers. By far the most important, however, was Walther von der Vogelweide (*c.* 1165–1230). He was, indeed, the chief lyric poet of Germany before Goethe, and his high personal ideals, winning personality, sensitive and poetic nature, and versatility as an artist combine to make him one of the most interesting of medieval poets. His years of preparation were spent at the court in Vienna. For a period he had a rather precarious existence as a wandering minstrel. His legendary meeting with his great contemporary Wolfram von Eschenbach, at the Wartburg, is made a picturesque incident by Wagner in his music drama "Tannhäuser." Walther was fortunate in having the cultured Hohenstaufen emperor Frederick II as his patron during his later years. He had long craved a settled habitation.

"Fain, could it be, would I a home obtain,
And warm me by a hearth-side of my own.
Then, then, I'd sing about the sweet birds' strain,
And fields and flowers, as I have whilome done;
And paint in song the lily and the rose
That dwell upon *her* cheek who smiles on me.
But lone I stray—no home its comfort shows:
Ah, luckless man! still doomed a *guest* to be!"[1]

A number of Walther's poems have been translated by Edward Taylor. The reader is referred to them (see the extracts in the Warner Library) for examples of his various meters and his wide range of subjects. Walther, with his vivid patriotism and independence of spirit, proved a powerful political force in the Germany of his day. Few German writers possessed so engaging a personality.

[1] Translation by Edward Taylor.

"I should be sorry," remarks an admiring contemporary, "for anyone who could forget him."

By the fourteenth century the minnesingers were giving way to the mastersingers. Life had become more realistic and prosaic; knighthood and the life of the courts made less appeal; the middle class began to assert itself; towns, with their industrial life, their burghers, their guilds of workers, sprang up; the first universities were founded; there was a demand for moral and didactic literature. All this is reflected in the poetry of the period. The artisans who succeeded the court poets and minstrels were sadly wanting in poetic fire and imagery. With them technique was everything. These mechanics came together in guilds, or singing-schools, and contended for prizes. Southern Germany, particularly Nuremberg, was their principal center, and the sixteenth century their great period.

A new and much more important literary development, dating chiefly from the fifteenth century, must now claim our attention. There was an extraordinary and long-continued outburst of lyric activity on the part of the people. A good deal of this lyric poetry had been in existence for a long period, unwritten, and was first collected at the end of the fourteenth century. This genuine poetry of the people, or folk song, was not ordinarily narrative in form—for the Germans have not taken naturally to the ballad form—but purely lyric. In richness, beauty, and variety it surpasses the similar poetry of other nations. Thousands of specimens have been collected. They deal with common events, domestic scenes, war and conviviality and comradeship, nature, and all the sentiments of human life. A famous collection of this poetry, "Des Knaben Wunderhorn," published in 1806–1808, inspired the poet Heine to write, "In these songs one feels the heart-beatings of the German people; here reveals itself all the somber joyousness, all the idle wisdom of the nation; here German anger drums its measure, here German jest pipes its notes, and here German love blends its kisses."

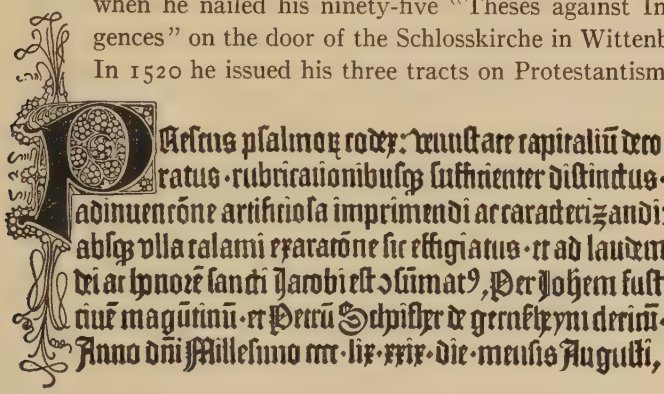
Reformation and Renaissance

From early times almost to our own day Germany was separated into a number of virtually independent states. This was due partly to the break-up of Charlemagne's eastern dominion into several groups, and to the notion of the medieval German emperors that their glory consisted more in their overlordship of the illusory Holy Roman Empire than in bringing together the scattered principalities of Germany into one political whole. The power of the vassal princes grew apace during these centuries, and in 1254, for example, at the close of the Hohenstaufen period, there were some three hundred separate states, united only in common blood, language, and customs. An interesting movement dates from the same century, however,—the rise of the free cities and the increasing power of the burghers. We have seen that in literature both mastersong and folk song represented the expression of the common people rather than the court poets. The once rich period of Middle High German had departed—a new age was about to dawn.

In recording the disappearance of medievalism and the emergence of modern life in Germany, let us note several contributing causes. There was a deep desire on the part of all classes for the intellectual life. Within the two centuries succeeding the establishment of the University of Prague in 1348, fourteen institutions of higher learning were founded. There was a dissatisfaction with existing society and religion, to which biting satire gave witness—especially the so-called beast fable, represented by its most famous example, "Reynard the Fox." The invention of printing from movable type, about 1450, soon brought literature within the reach of every man. His horizon was expanded also by the knowledge of new lands across the seas. Humanistic studies were eagerly pursued in Germany, as in other European countries. Erasmus (1466–1536) and Reuchlin (1455–1522) were great and influential factors in the Humanist movement, but as they wrote chiefly in Latin, their writings need little comment in a brief discussion of German literature. Humanism had the tendency to influence religious reform. Furthermore, the temporal princes of Germany were perennially jealous of the

power of the Church. Last of all, there were certain scandals and abuses within the Church that brought about the Protestant Reformation and the Counter-Reformation of the Roman Church itself.

The figure of **Martin Luther** dominates the period of the Reformation. He was born at Eisleben, in 1483. It may be said that the Reformation was launched and a new age begun October 31, 1517, when he nailed his ninety-five "Theses against Indulgences" on the door of the Schlosskirche in Wittenberg. In 1520 he issued his three tracts on Protestantism; in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dei ac honorē sancti Jacobi est ꝯsūmatꝰ, Per Johem fust
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EARLY PRINTING (CLOSING LINES OF THE PSALTER OF 1459)

the following year he appeared before the Imperial Diet in Worms; in 1522 appeared his German translation of the New Testament, followed, twelve years later, by the Old Testament. He died at Eisleben, in 1546. Judged as a factor in the history of German literature, Luther made his chief contribution in his translation of the Bible. The strong, popular language which he evolved became forthwith the speech of Germany. Luther's Bible is therefore a literary monument. Among Luther's other very numerous writings his "Table Talk" deserves special mention; also his hymns, thirty-seven in all, of which the most celebrated is "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott." The first and fourth stanzas of this hymn, in Carlyle's rugged literal translation, are here given:

"A safe stronghold our God is still,
A trusty shield and weapon;
He'll help us clear from all the ill
That hath us now o'ertaken.

The ancient Prince of Hell
Hath risen with purpose fell;
Strong mail of craft and power
He weareth in this hour—
On earth is not his fellow.

"God's word, for all their craft and force,
One moment will not linger,
But, spite of Hell, shall have its course:
'Tis written by his finger.
And though they take our life,
Goods, honor, children, wife,
Yet is their profit small:
These things shall vanish all,
The City of God remaineth."

In our brief study it is not possible to devote much attention to other writers of the German Reformation—to Melanchthon, Luther's friend; nor to Ulrich von Hutten, whose writings were mainly in Latin; nor to the satirists Murner and Fischart. **Hans Sachs,** however, though not a man of genius, is of interest because of his prolific production and because of his influence on the drama. By trade he was a cobbler of Nuremberg, where he was born in 1494 and where he died at the age of eighty-two. He is himself responsible for a catalogue of his writings: forty-two hundred mastersongs, two hundred and eight comedies and tragedies, seventeen hundred comic tales, and seventy-three miscellaneous lyrics! We are not told how much cobbling he did by the way. His friend Adam Puschmann describes Hans Sachs, in a song on his death, as seen in a Christmas Eve vision seated in his summerhouse: "In the middle, a round table covered with green silk; whereat sat an old man gray and white, and like a dove; and he had a great beard, and read in a great book with golden clasps." It will be recalled that Wagner has paid tribute to Hans Sachs in "Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg."

The drama in Germany had its beginnings, as in neighboring countries, in religious plays written largely in Latin. By the fif-

teenth century a popular type of drama in the language of the people had been evolved, the *Fastnachtsspiel*, or Shrovetide play. In the era of the Reformation dramatic production was common and varied. Hans Sachs's chief strength as a playwright showed itself in Shrovetide plays consisting of humorous stories in dialogue form. German drama, however, had not yet arrived in any real sense.

A barren period in German literature, the seventeenth century, was due chiefly to that terrible tragedy the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), a conflict between Protestantism and Catholicism, which had its rise in Germany but involved a large part of the Continent and in the end reduced central Europe to a forlorn and impoverished condition. In 1618 the German people numbered thirty millions; in 1648, twelve millions. Recovery was slow. Intellectual freedom was crushed by a narrow orthodoxy; there were political disruption and a noticeable lack of patriotism. Of the numerous writings of the period few were vigorous or original; foreign models were drawn upon. Martin Opitz, a poet and critic, is the chief representative of the Renaissance movement in Germany. Among religious writers the mystic, Böhme, achieved some prominence. Notable advances were made also in German hymnology. The beginnings of the modern German novel were laid in this century, its chief representative being the "Simplicissimus," a sort of picaresque tale by Christoffel von Grimmelshausen, appearing in 1669. In the early eighteenth century the center of German intellectual life was Leipzig, in Saxony, where the influence of Gottsched was paramount. This critic based his reforms on French literary standards. Swiss scholars, under the leadership of Bodmer and influenced by English writers (particularly Addison and Milton), weakened the position of Gottsched and brought about a literary controversy which attracted the attention of all Germany.

The Classical Period

German literature was, however, destined for better things than mere critical discussions. Its greatest era was already dawning. National feeling was quickened by the rise of Prussia and by

Frederick the Great's remarkable feats in the Seven Years' War (1756–1763). The appearance of the first part of Klopstock's "Der Messias" ("The Messiah"), in 1748, gave impetus to a literary movement unequaled in the history of Germany and continuing, with its changes and cross-currents and with the participation of a bewildering number of writers in every field, until the death of Goethe, in 1832.

On the political side this period brought about momentous changes. Prussia, which had been made a kingdom by Frederick I in 1701, had grown in power and prestige. Under Frederick the Great (who ruled from 1740 to 1786) it took a conspicuous position among German states. The effects of the French Revolution and of the Napoleonic Era which followed involved by slow degrees all Germany. In 1804 the Holy Roman Empire, for a long time past of little consequence in the affairs of Europe, came to an end. Two years later occurred the great disasters to Prussian arms at Auerstadt and Jena, followed by humiliation and loss of territory. But in 1813 Napoleon, on his return from his Russian campaign, was decisively defeated in the battle of Leipzig, and in 1815 Germany played an important part at Waterloo. A loose confederation was now formed in Germany, consisting of thirty-nine sovereign states—Austria and Prussia being by far the most powerful—operating under a new constitution.

The intellectual currents of the Classical period of German literature are of special interest. At the beginning, pietism, a revival of genuine religious feeling which concerned the heart rather than the intellect, was much in evidence. The pietists were individualistic and introspective and lovers of nature. Klopstock was their chief spokesman. Lessing and, to a smaller extent, Winkelmann were early representatives of rationalism, another individualistic movement, which succeeded pietism. The rationalists, related to contemporary thinkers of the same type in France and England, insisted upon individual reason as the sufficient interpreter of life: they believed what could be proved; they stood for robust intellectual freedom. Rationalism in Germany did not move in the direction of the investigation of political rights, as in England, France, and Amer-

ica, but emphasized tolerance in religion and thought, and endeavored to reconcile reason with religion. Sentimentalism, as exemplified by the Frenchman Rousseau, was the reaction to rationalism. Its headway in Germany was checked by Immanuel Kant, Germany's foremost philosophical thinker, who stood for a sane rationalism and for personal responsibility in life and thought. The influence of Herder is largely responsible for the *Sturm und Drang*, or "Storm and Stress," movement, characterized by a strongly nationalistic feeling, by the overthrow of tradition and convention, and by the extravagance and virility of youth. Its chief representative works were Goethe's "Götz von Berlichingen" and Schiller's "Die Räuber" ("The Robbers"). But the movement expressed itself also in lyric poetry. Here Klopstock was considered its progenitor. A band of students issued at Göttingen the so-called *Musenalmanach,* which contained Storm and Stress poetry, the most conspicuous being ballads by Bürger, the chief ballad poet of Germany. Bürger's "Lenore" achieved great fame. The Storm and Stress movement soon advanced into the period of the masterly and mature literature of the closing years of the eighteenth century, when Classical principles were generally accepted. With the new century came Romanticism, influential throughout all western Europe and continuing in Germany until the movement known as "Young Germany" supplanted it shortly after the death of Goethe.

Our study must be confined largely to the contributions made to German literature during this rich and varied period by Klopstock, Wieland, Lessing, Herder, Kant, Schiller, and Goethe.

Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724–1803) had a long life and a long literary career. While still a student of theology at Jena he finished in prose three cantos of "Der Messias," and shortly afterwards (1748) at Leipzig he published anonymously this portion of his epic, which he had in the meantime changed into hexameter verse. He lived for many years in Copenhagen, where he had gone at the invitation of the king of Denmark, and later (1771–1803) in Hamburg, where he died. It was not until 1773 that the last canto of "Der Messias" appeared. In all, the epic contains twenty cantos

and about twenty thousand lines. Milton is clearly Klopstock's inspiration. The scene is laid on earth and in heaven and hell, and the theme has to do with the passion, death, resurrection, ascension, and glorification of Christ. Yet the narrative element is of the slightest, for the epic is in reality a rhythmic musical composition, the work of a deeply religious poet gifted with imagination and idealism. Klopstock's power diminished with his years; and when the closing portion of his epic appeared, the phase which it represented in the literary life of Germany was outworn. In his odes Klopstock appeared to better advantage and left on the whole a deeper impression. These emotional and sincere poems broke from the artificial standards which had existed before his day, and were written in a great variety of meters. Klopstock's name was a magical one, and his poems exerted a profound influence.

Christoph Martin Wieland (1733–1813), the son of a Swabian clergyman, was educated at Erfurt and later at Tübingen, where he studied law. He was greatly influenced by Bodmer, whom he visited in Zurich, as did Klopstock. His earlier moral and religious writings, partly in prose and partly in verse, were succeeded by works of a very different character, revealing a typical man of the world. His prose romance "Don Sylvio von Rosalva" displays cynicism and raillery. "Agathon," which followed, is an early example of the psychological novel; it influenced Goethe in the development of his "Wilhelm Meister." Wieland rendered Germany great service by giving it the first translations of Shakespeare. He published (1762–1766) prose translations of twenty-two of the plays. From 1772 to the close of his life Wieland lived in Weimar, as one of the distinguished circle of literary men who graced the court of Karl August. On Goethe's arrival Wieland became his warm friend. "Oberon," a graceful and fantastic epic which mingles medieval romance and the story of King Oberon and Queen Titania of fairyland, is regarded as Wieland's masterpiece, and is the only one of his very numerous works which is commonly read in our own day. Wieland was cynical, witty, and light-hearted, a gifted but not a great writer.

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–1781), on the other hand, had undoubted power and was one of the most influential of German writers and thinkers. A man of high personal ideals and character, Lessing stood for intellectual freedom and exact scholarship. His criticism showed an enthusiasm for Classical literature, analytical powers and originality of a high order, an emancipation from the slavish influence of French criticism such as that of Voltaire, and a thoroughgoing appreciation of Shakespeare as a dramatic artist. He was the first of Germany's great dramatists, and in his chief play revealed the tolerance of German rationalism at its best. Lessing was born in a small town in Saxony, the son of a clergyman. His scholarly tastes were inherited from generations of cultured men and women. As a student at Leipzig his ambition was to be a "German Molière," but his earliest dramatic pieces had slight worth. After the completion of his university days at Wittenberg, Lessing made his home successively in Berlin, Leipzig, Breslau, Hamburg, and at Wolfenbüttel, where for the last eleven years of his life he held the position of librarian of the ducal library.

GOTTHOLD EPHRAIM LESSING
After a painting by C. Jäger

Lessing's most important critical writings were his "Letters on Literature," written in conjunction with two other writers (1758–1765), the "Laokoon" (1766), and a series of dramatic criticisms appearing in Hamburg during the years 1767–1769. In the "Laokoon" he showed himself in his critical theories somewhat in opposition to Winkelmann. Lessing endeavored to show the limits

and functions of poetry and of the other arts. The "Laokoon" had an immediate effect upon German criticism.

The best of Lessing's early plays is "Miss Sara Sampson," a five-act domestic tragedy. Much more important are his three later plays "Minna von Barnhelm," "Emilia Galotti," and "Nathan der Weise." The first is a national comedy dealing with the period succeeding the Seven Years' War. The hero, Tellheim, and Minna his betrothed, are strongly drawn. For the tragedy "Emilia Galotti" Lessing drew upon the Roman story of Virginia. Though the theme is somewhat remote, the play is entirely German in spirit and is still popular on the stage; the sharply contrasted characters make it notable. On the other hand, "Nathan der Weise" is not as a play well-constructed or faultless, though its central motive, the story of the three rings, which Lessing borrowed from Boccaccio, renders it one of the best-remembered of German plays. Nathan, the wise Jew, is asked by the Mohammedan chieftain Saladin to name the true religion—Christianity, Judaism, or Mohammedanism—and in reply tells the famous story which inculcates the lesson that the test of the truth or falsehood of one's faith is found in the nature of the life of its possessor. In this play Lessing was combating the bigotry of his day and was teaching a fine lesson in tolerance for all time.

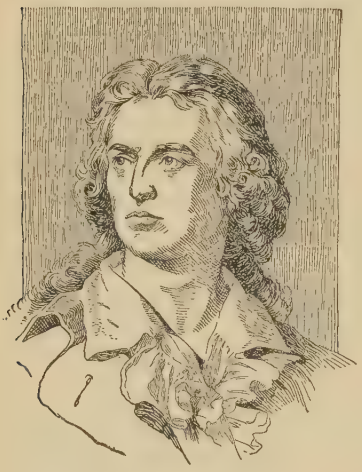
Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744–1803), born in East Prussia and educated at the University of Königsberg, was influenced in his youth by Kant, Rousseau, Shakespeare, Ossian, and others. When as a traveling tutor he reached Strasbourg in 1770, he proved to be a man of moral enthusiasm, inspiring ideas, and keen critical power. Goethe, then a student at Strasbourg, met Herder and gladly sat at his feet. Their meeting was an interesting moment in the history of German literature. Herder and Goethe presently issued "Von deutscher Art und Kunst," a slender volume which was really the platform, or manifesto, of the Storm and Stress movement. Justus Möser was associated with them in this enterprise. Herder's other writings—his essays, his poems, and his collection of popular songs—are not so important as the general influence of the man himself. Herder had an almost prophetic

vision of the future development of literature and thought, and had the faculty of firing others with his own original ideas. From 1776 until his death he lived in Weimar in an official capacity. On his grave is the motto "Light, Love, Life."

Before considering the culmination of German literature in Goethe and Schiller, let us bear in mind that a bewildering number of writers contributed to the luster of the Classical period—poets, novelists, scientists, historians, critics, and philosophers. Special mention, at least, should be made of the poets Hölderlin and Hebel, and of Jean Paul Friedrich Richter, the delightful writer of stories and novels. "Jean Paul," as he was affectionately called, had a great contemporary reputation in European literary circles (witness Carlyle's praise of him), but he is little read in our day. Kant, and to a less extent his successor Fichte, determined the philosophical thought of the period. **Immanuel Kant** (1724–1804) possessed probably the finest philosophical mind of the modern world and has earned a place by the side of Plato and Aristotle. This little man with a big head and intellect was an East Prussian, and during his eighty years of life never traveled more than sixty miles away from Königsberg, where he made his home and where for many years he was professor of philosophy in the university. Schiller in his youth and Herder in his maturity were deeply impressed by Kant, and the ideas of this great philosopher steadied, influenced, and, indeed, dominated all Germany. Kant's early writings were in the field of physical science, but his philosophical treatises were his characteristic work, and these have been translated into all literary languages. "The Critique of Pure Reason" deals with theoretical or speculative matters, "The Critique of Practical Reason" with practical or ethical matters, and "The Critique of Judgment" with art and æsthetics. Modern metaphysics is based on Kant's philosophy. His invigorating ethical system and his insistence on the moral law had a far-reaching effect in Germany and in all intellectual Europe.

Friedrich von Schiller (1759–1805)

Schiller makes a deep impression upon us because of his triumph over untoward circumstances of life, his mastery over himself, his absolute sincerity of heart and mind, his earnestness and high ideals, and his remarkable achievements in the field of literature during his brief career. He did not possess the universality of Goethe or prove so great in inspiration and intellect, but his place is none the less an assured one. "Schiller," says Carlyle, "may or may not be called a man of genius by his critics; but his mind in either case will remain one of the most enviable which can fall to the share of a mortal." Menzel writes of Schiller, "His feelings correspond to the earliest aspiration of the yet uncorrupted youthful heart, of love yet pure, of faith yet unshaken, of hope still warm, of the vigor of young souls not enervated." The following comments of Goethe make it clear that Schiller is a thoroughly modern man:



FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER
After a painting by C. Jäger

"Throughout all the works of Schiller there runs the idea of liberty, and this idea assumed a different form as Schiller advanced in culture and became a new man. In his youth it was the personal liberty of the individual which occupied him in his own life, and which is expressed in his works; in his later life it was an ideal spiritual liberty."

Schiller's birthplace was Marbach, in Württemberg. Although his literary tastes were early disclosed by his reading of Klopstock, Rousseau, Shakespeare, and the classics, his ardent spirit suffered restraint in the military school in Württemberg and later in the

city of Stuttgart, where, under the patronage of the duke of Württemberg, he received his education. To his military studies he added jurisprudence and medicine, and then secured employment as regimental surgeon in Stuttgart. "Die Räuber" ("The Robbers"), his first venture in the field of literature, was published in 1781. Schiller had burst his fetters. But he found himself in opposition to the duke, and the next year he left Stuttgart secretly. Then began several years of wandering and difficulties, during which he struggled with ill health, debts, and manifold discouragements. He lived in Mannheim, in Bauerbach, and again, as theater poet, in Mannheim. In addition to "The Robbers," he produced the plays "Fiesco" and "Kabale und Liebe" ("Cabal and Love"), all of them written in prose. During this early period he also partially supported himself as a journalist. Better days dawned in 1785, when as the guest of Körner he went to Leipzig and later to Dresden. "Don Carlos" was finished in 1787; this and all his succeeding plays were written in verse. His circumstances improved and his interests widened. In 1787 he removed to Weimar. There and in the neighboring university town of Jena he made his home until his death. In this congenial atmosphere, happily married, surrounded by friends, Schiller wrote his historical and æsthetic works, the noblest of his poems, and the greatest of his plays. From 1794 to the close of his life he lived on terms of special intimacy with Goethe. The monument at Weimar to the memory of these two chief writers of Germany pays lasting tribute to one of the most inspiring of friendships.

Of the early dramas of Schiller "The Robbers" makes the strongest appeal. It is afire with emotional intensity and the impetuosity of youth. Extravagant and juvenile though it may be,—Schiller was only nineteen years of age when he developed it,—it displays real dramatic instinct and reflects perfectly the current impulses of the period which produced it. This is proved by the immense enthusiasm with which the play was received in Germany, and, indeed, throughout Europe. By the time Schiller wrote "Don Carlos" in its finished form, he had definitely passed the crudity of his earlier period. Its maturity and its ingenious plot make this

clear. The play is concerned with the tragic difficulties of Don Carlos of Spain, condemned to death by his father the king.

Schiller's attention was taken up for several years after this early period with journalism, history, and philosophy. His "Revolt of the Netherlands" earned for him a place among historians and a position, secured through the help of Goethe, as professor of history at the University of Jena. Then followed the "History of the Thirty Years' War." Schiller's historical method was not that with which we are familiar in our day, for he was not primarily an investigator or a scientific historian but a stylist and literary artist, painting striking pictures and portraying large historical movements. In his philosophical writings Schiller built upon the ideas of Kant in the field of moral duty and in the fields of æsthetics and poetic art. It should be noted also that there is a philosophical basis in all of Schiller's mature poetry and drama. The ballads which he wrote with such fine poetic inspiration were designed to present moral issues, being concerned with such ideas as those of self-mastery, justice, and the fear of God. Many of his poems are famous, notably "Das Lied von der Glocke" ("The Song of the Bell"), of which there have been many translations into English.

Schiller's position as Germany's representative dramatist is based upon the splendid series of plays of his last years. In "Wallenstein" (1798–1799) he takes for his subject a great figure from the Thirty Years' War, but his theme is essentially that of Greek tragedy, presenting a human soul foredoomed by the Fates. It is in three parts; in reality, however, it is one long play of ten acts. Schiller draws upon English history for his next drama, "Maria Stuart" (1800), but the material is not altogether true to fact, and the play lacks dramatic intensity. On the other hand, it has proved a general favorite owing to the pathetic figure of the heroine and to her moral strength as the tragic moment approaches. "Die Jungfrau von Orleans" ("The Maid of Orleans") (1801), "a romantic tragedy," to use Schiller's term, presents a heroic character in idealized guise, with history changed in such a way as to exhibit powerfully the author's ethical purposes. It is well unified and highly poetic and artistic. Schiller was less successful in his next play, "Die Braut

von Messina" (1802–1803), a play purely Greek in its dramatic form. But he surpassed himself in his latest completed drama, "Wilhelm Tell" (1804), exhibiting the very incarnation of the spirit that loves freedom and hates tyranny. It makes to this day a strong patriotic appeal and will doubtless always be reckoned as Schiller's masterpiece. In the year following the appearance of "Wilhelm Tell," the fragile life of Schiller came to an end. That life, studied in detail, is an inspiration. Carlyle's biography of Schiller should be widely read. We draw from Carlyle the following delineation of the poet's power:

"Perhaps his greatest faculty was a half-poetical, half-philosophical imagination: a faculty teeming with magnificence and brilliancy; now adorning, or aiding to erect, a stately pyramid of scientific speculation; now brooding over the abysses of thought and feeling, till thoughts and feelings, else unutterable, were embodied in expressive forms, and palaces and landscapes glowing in ethereal beauty rose like exhalations from the bosom of the deep."

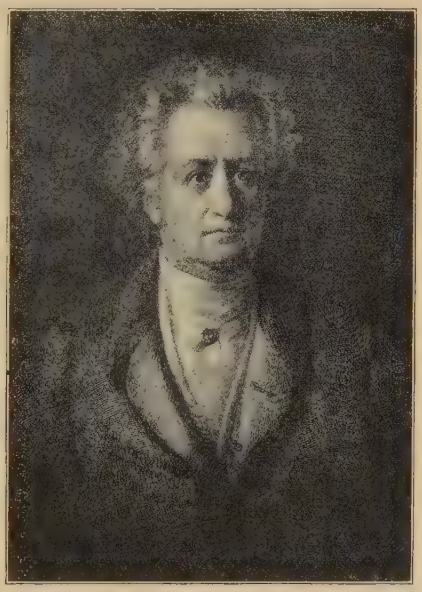
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832)

The authors of the Iliad, the "Divine Comedy," and "Hamlet" have left us slight record of the outward events of their lives, but the biography of the author of "Faust" is extraordinarily full. Goethe's "Die Leiden des jungen Werthers" ("The Sorrows of Werther") and "Wilhelm Meister" are largely autobiographical; "Faust" is self-revealing; "Dichtung und Wahrheit" is a definite account of Goethe's earlier years written by himself; while the "Correspondence with Schiller," "Conversations with Eckermann," and other volumes disclose with great particularity the history of his later years. Furthermore, biographies of Goethe have been very numerous. Lewes's "Life of Goethe," though the first edition appeared as long ago as 1855, is still considered an important volume—one of the most stimulating and fascinating of all biographies. Bielschowsky's "Life of Goethe" (translated 1905–1908) is one of the best of the more recent works. The reader of this amazingly interesting biographical material will gain an im-

pression of the dynamic power, unceasing industry, versatility, humanity, and genius of Goethe that nothing can ever efface. "Since this morning," said the poet Wieland when he first met Goethe on the arrival of the latter at Weimar in 1775, "my soul has been as full of Goethe as a dewdrop of the morning sun." Not dissimilar is the effect conveyed even at this distant day as we come into contact with Goethe's striking personality.

Goethe was born of a well-to-do family in Frankfort-on-Main, August 28, 1749. His father's coldly intellectual and irascible character was offset by the warm heart and cheerful nature of his mother and by the sympathetic understanding of his sister Cornelia. Wolfgang himself, passionate, quick of apprehension, and original, even as a boy showed great promise. His studies included Hebrew and Latin, the rudiments of painting, and a great variety of dramatic reading taken in connection with the operation of a puppet theater of his own. During the period of the Seven Years' War the boy acquired a knowledge of French through a French officer who was quartered at his father's house. At Leipzig, where he went in 1765, he studied jurisprudence and art, and in literature was influenced chiefly by Lessing, Wieland, and Klopstock. Here he had also a passionate love affair. After an interval at home, where he learned much from the spiritual nature of Fräulein von Klettenberg (the original of the study of a "beautiful soul" given in later years in "Wilhelm Meister"), Goethe went in 1770 to Strasbourg to complete his law course. His Strasbourg experiences influenced him deeply—his legal and medical studies; his reading of Shakespeare, Ossian, and Homer; his contact with Herder, five years his senior, and their common contributions to the Storm and Stress movement; most of all, his love for Friederike Brion, the pastor's daughter at Sesenheim, the most beautiful and unaffected and lovable of all the women concerned with Goethe's life. Goethe's own description of Friederike in his autobiography, and of the breaking-off of his friendship with her at the close of that eventful year, can hardly be surpassed. Friederike's character seems to be reflected in other portions of the poet's writings, particularly in the characterization of Gretchen in "Faust."

Goethe had now (1771) secured his doctor's degree and soon left Frankfort for Wetzlar, where he spent six months as jurist and advocate. His hopeless love during that period for Charlotte Buff, engaged to his friend Kestner, he presently immortalized in the scarcely disguised autobiographical work "The Sorrows of Werther." For three years (1772–1775) Goethe now lived at Frankfort as advocate and man of letters. In 1773 appeared "Götz von Berlichingen," not the earliest of his writings but the first to establish his fame. It is a loose historical drama of the sixteenth century, much stronger in its character study and in the unrestrained vigor of its language than in its plot structure. Shakespeare influenced him in this tragedy, while the prose tale which appeared the following year, "The Sorrows of Werther," reminds us of the French sentimentalist Rousseau. All Germany wept over the sad fortunes of young Werther and took a deep interest in his sensitive and lovable nature, his hopeless love for Lotte, and his tragic death. The work had an enormous popularity in its day throughout all Europe, and it is still read for the beauty of its style and sentiments, though it represents a phase of literature long past. The plays "Clavigo" and "Stella," belonging to the same period, are less important.



JOHANN WOLFGANG GOETHE

In 1775, when Goethe had reached his twenty-sixth year, occurred a momentous change in his life. Accepting the invitation of Duke Karl August, he visited him at his court in Weimar. During

the preceding year he had been engaged to Anna Elizabeth Schönemann (the "Lili" of his lyrics), but, largely at the instance of her family, this engagement was broken off. Goethe went gladly to Weimar; he could hardly have foreseen, however, that here he was to make his home until the close of his life. Weimar at the time of Goethe's arrival was an inconspicuous town of six thousand inhabitants, with few natural advantages. However, in Anna Amalia, the mother of the duke, and in Karl August, who became ruler of the duchy in 1775, Weimar possessed two very remarkable personalities. Karl August's native endowments and his poetic temperament and graces gave him in time a place of leadership among the German princes of his day second only to that of Frederick II himself. Weimar became the center of intellectual Germany, for it was associated with the leaders of the Classical period, with Wieland and Herder, with the good Schiller and the great Goethe.

In those early Weimar years Goethe was first of all the friend of Karl August. The two young men exhibited all the enthusiasm and extravagance of youth. Then, settling down to the more serious duties of government, the duke utilized Goethe's talents in various ways. In due time he ennobled him and made him president of the ducal chamber. Of more interest to us is the fact that for a series of years he held the directorship of the ducal theater, a position which gave him the opportunity to develop his theories of art. Goethe's ardent emotional nature found outlet in his friendship for Charlotte von Stein, wife of the duke's Master of Horse. She was his senior by several years and a woman of culture and forcefulness. A deep friendship based on intellectual sympathy rather than passionate love was the essence of their relationship. Two years (1786–1788) of the greatest importance in Goethe's life were spent in Italy, where he thoroughly revised his theories of art and life. "Iphigenie," "Egmont," and "Torquato Tasso" displayed his magnificent powers during the years that immediately followed. On his return from Italy he contracted a relationship with Christiane Vulpius, whom he married in 1806.

Another period in Goethe's life began with his friendship for Schiller in 1794. These two poets inspired each other in their finest

work. The first part of "Wilhelm Meister" appeared in 1796; it had been begun nineteen years earlier. "Hermann und Dorothea," a narrative poem, or small epic, of middle-class life, ranking very high among Goethe's writings, belongs to the same period. The poet's versatility is shown in the great variety of his writings, including brilliant scientific researches prophetic of the work of the scientists of the new century.

The closing period saw the appearance of "Dichtung und Wahrheit," the issuance of the second part of "Wilhelm Meister," and the publication of the "Italienische Reise" ("Italian Journey") and a number of other literary and scientific writings. Most important of all was the completion of "Faust," which had been in a sense his chief work for sixty years, and which was finished only eight months before his death.

It is manifest that in our narrow confines we can give only brief attention to Goethe's chief works and must pass by altogether his exceedingly rich lyric poetry and other important writings. Let us speak first of a few of his greater plays. "Egmont" was projected while Goethe was still in Frankfort, but did not appear until more than ten years later. The central figure of this historical tragedy was the leader of the Dutch people in their struggle for liberty against Philip II of Spain. Goethe's purpose, however, was not so much to present historical episodes as to draw powerfully and attractively the character of Egmont, his greatness in the midst of difficulties, and his love for Klärchen, one of the most beautiful of the women of Goethe. In "Iphigenie auf Tauris" and in "Torquato Tasso" we see exhibited Goethe's overmastering affection for classic art and literature. The former play had been sketched several years before he went to Italy, but was recast, written in verse in Rome, and published in 1786. Euripides' tragedy is its basis, but the material has been reshaped to conform to the psychology of our modern world. The character of Iphigenia seems to be greater, more noble, and more pure than in the Greek play. A careful study of the two plays—the ancient and the modern—dealing with the same theme is of extraordinary interest. "Torquato Tasso," like "Iphigenie," was written originally in prose. Not until 1790, ten

years later, did it appear in its poetic form. The circumstances of Tasso's life are already familiar to us. Goethe's play opens with the period when the poet has just been given a laurel wreath upon the completion of his masterpiece. It portrays his suspicious and sensitive nature, his falling out with his patrons, the rejection of his love, and his banishment from the court of Ferrara. There is little action. It is a play of introspection, inner conflict, and disillusionment, and has been well described as the tragedy of genius. While very faulty as a play, it contains some of Goethe's most wonderful poetry.

"Wilhelm Meister" is one of the greatest prose works of German literature, and it just misses, through its prolixity and its uneven inspiration, being one of the chief novels of Europe. The first part was nineteen years in the making (1777–1796), and the second part is the work of Goethe's old age. Reading it in Carlyle's eloquent translation, we are rewarded by scenes and passages rarely equaled in any prose work. The author's wisdom, philosophy of life, ideas of art, and political and religious creed stand revealed. Wilhelm suggests again and again Goethe himself. In the first part we see him during the period of his apprenticeship, advancing from careless youth to a serious attitude toward life and its reponsibilities. The glimpses of Marianne, of Philine, of the Countess, of Natalie, and, above all, of the Harper and Mignon (one of the greatest creations in imaginative literature) are all engaging. Goethe's shrewd criticisms of "Hamlet," as introduced in this part, have in themselves rendered the work famous. The second part, dealing with Wilhelm's travels, possesses less interest, though Carlyle's praise of its high art, and especially of its inculcation of the idea of reverence in youth, is well justified.

Goethe's "Faust," like the Homeric epics, the "Divine Comedy," "Don Quixote," and the plays of Shakespeare, belongs with the supreme books of the world. It should be universally known; it is not enough to read about it or to read analyses of it. The work itself in the original, or in Bayard Taylor's English translation in the original meters, offers an inspiring literary study. Add to this such an interpretative work as Davidson's "Philosophy

of Goethe's Faust" or the detailed study presented in the third volume of Bielschowsky's "Life of Goethe." In the first place, it will be found that Faust is the mirror of Goethe's own life and aspirations, the perfect expression of his personality and his life

FAUST

After the painting by C. Geyer

philosophy. It reflects Goethe's interest in medievalism with its magic and alchemy, his literary phases,—Storm and Stress, Classicism, Romanticism,—his philosophical pursuits and scientific studies, his intellectual and moral freedom. Some of the characters of this great drama of the soul suggest Goethe's own friends and

associates and other men of his period,—for instance, Lord Byron, who had made a deep impression on Goethe. Faust himself in his upward strivings is Goethe, and, as in the poet's own case, Faust's weaknesses are not so significant as his strength of mind and heart and faith.

As a boy Goethe was familiar with the Faust legend. He had seen the rude puppet play, and he knew the first printed version, of 1587, and the English play of Christopher Marlowe, first acted in 1593. The legend dealt with Dr. Johann Faust's interest in magic and the unseen world, his infidelity, his league with the Devil, his varied experiences and pranks, and the passing of his soul to perdition when the twenty-four years' compact was closed. It had been elaborated many times before Goethe's day, but was now to be transformed into a universal human drama. As a youth just returned from Leipzig Goethe was already working on his material; he carried the early manuscript to Strasbourg; he read portions to Klopstock at Frankfort in 1774; he took the work with him to Weimar the next year and probably by this time had the outline of the whole drama pretty well shaped in his mind; he carried the now yellow manuscript to Italy and added new material there. It was not until 1790 that any portion was published, and this was only "A Fragment." Goethe's friendship with Schiller advanced the work appreciably and added to its philosophical content. In 1808 the First Part, including the fragment of 1790, appeared; in 1827, the Helena episode; and finally, in 1832, after the poet's death, the entire Second Part, with the Helena episode as the third act.

In form "Faust" consists in its First Part of twenty-five scenes, preceded by a Dedication, a Prelude on the Stage, and a Prologue in Heaven. More than half of the scenes deal with the tragic and affecting Gretchen episode. The Second Part also includes twenty-five scenes, divided into five acts. The whole is written in verse, of varying meters and character—monologue, dialogue, and lyric.

The underlying meaning, or symbolism, in such a work as this is always of interest. Goethe himself tells us that a large part of the drama was subjectively written, that Mephistopheles and Faust were the opposite poles of his own character, and that his riper na-

ture, his æsthetic and religious feeling, are expressed largely in the Second Part. He says of the whole, "It permanently preserves the period of development of a human soul, which is tormented by all that afflicts mankind, shaken also by all that disturbs it, repelled by all that it finds repellent, and made happy by all that it desires." The Faust story is essentially Germanic, coming from Reformation and Renaissance times—the times when the human spirit was shaking itself free from institutions and was striving for power and illumination. But Goethe added much: the aspirations, spirituality, and philosophy of his own century, the interests and enthusiasms of his own rich nature.

The Prologue in Heaven suggests at once the Book of Job, but in "Faust" Mephistopheles is the spirit of evil, not the testing spirit. God allows Faust to be tempted. "Man errs," he says, "as long as he aspires." "A good man in his dark impulse is still conscious of the right way." As the drama opens, the learned Faust is represented as thoroughly dissatisfied with life. He is saved from self-destruction, but his self-control is weakened and he is ready for new experiences, which are soon promised by Mephistopheles. The contract is that if the latter can destroy Faust's strivings and ambitions and give him complete satisfaction, even for a moment, his soul will belong to Mephistopheles. The evil spirit has a much more difficult task than he could possibly foresee: he cannot apprehend the depth of Faust's spiritual nature. In the meantime he gives Faust a taste of life—the crude revelry of Auerbach's Cellar, the wild orgies of the Brocken. The innocent Gretchen, over whom Mephistopheles has little control, now crosses Faust's path. The infatuation of Faust and Gretchen is mutual, and by slow degrees Faust loses his self-command, bringing about a deeply tragic situation: the ruin of Gretchen, the death of her mother, the loss of her brother by Faust's own hand, and the final execution of the hapless maid for the murder of her child,—all set forth in scenes scarcely equaled in the whole range of literature. Gretchen emerges from these tremendous life experiences pardoned and redeemed; but Faust, puzzled, disillusioned, weak, goes for the moment the other way with Mephistopheles.

In the Second Part we find Faust struggling out of his narrow subjective self into the larger world of humanity; he is becoming a representative man, seeking the highest existence. We cannot follow him in detail through his somewhat unheroic experiences at the Imperial Court, with the conjuring up of the spirits of Paris and Helena. Subsequently, by means of Homunculus, he is able himself to enter the Greek world and to join romantic Germany with classic Greece. Euphorion, the inspired genius who is the fruit of the union of Faust and Helena, wrecks himself through too high ideals. Faust, back in his own land, now seeks, because of his enlarged vision, a new life—a life of activity and usefulness. Though frustrated repeatedly by the evil machinations of Mephistopheles, there comes a time when Faust, now aged and sightless, has a vision of his goal and finds at last the moment of deepest satisfaction come to him in the prospect of the well-being of humanity through his own acts of beneficence. Mephistopheles claims his soul, but Faust has secured redemption. The angels sing:

"Whoe'er aspires unweariedly
Is not beyond redeeming.
And if he feels the grace of love
That from On High is given,
The Blessed Hosts, that wait above,
Shall welcome him to Heaven!"[1]

Romanticism

Before the close of Goethe's life a new movement in literature, which we term Romanticism, had come and had spent its force. It was connected with the similar movement in the other countries of western Europe. In Germany it represented, to use Professor Robertson's words, "an attempt to create a harmony of intellect and heart, of life and art, on the basis of individualism." On our restricted canvas its various phases cannot be shown; only a few of its leading representatives can be mentioned briefly. As the nineteenth century opened, four influential men were laying down the principles of the movement and were writing in its spirit. These

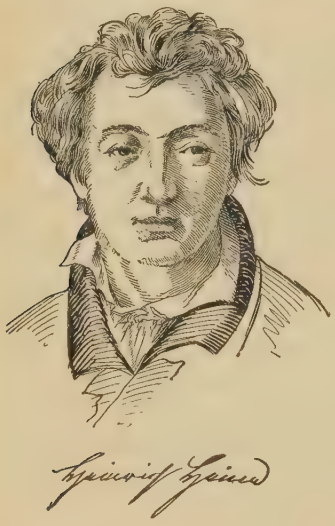
[1] Translation by Bayard Taylor.

were Ludwig Tieck, novelist, dramatist, essayist, and critic; the youthful Hardenberg ("Novalis"), who possessed an exquisite lyric gift; and the brothers August W. and Friedrich Schlegel, influential critics. August Schlegel's translation of Shakespeare was his chief gift to the German people. His "Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature" is still an important work of criticism after the lapse of over a hundred years.

The names of Brentano, Arnim, and the brothers Grimm are associated with an interesting Heidelberg group of men who rendered a great service in collecting folk songs and fairy tales. To the same period belong Adelbert von Chamisso, a Frenchman who is esteemed for his graceful German lyrics and ballads and his fanciful tale of "Peter Schlemihl"; and the Silesian Joseph von Eichendorff (1788–1857), a man of remarkable lyric gifts, the poet of the German forest. In the field of the drama the Romantic period is dominated by Heinrich von Kleist, soldier, professor, journalist, novelist, and dramatist, whose brief career was ended by his own act in 1811. His plays showed a constant increase in power, simplicity, and reality; and the last of these, the patriotic drama "Prinz Friedrich von Homburg," written in 1810, ranks among the great plays of Germany. Hoffmann (1776–1822), the writer of grotesque and morbid tales, was a master of prose fiction who earned a considerable reputation both in Germany and France.

Among later Romanticists we can but mention the poets Rückert and Platen and the novelists Hauff and Immerman. Let us pause for a moment, however, to consider Uhland and Grillparzer. Ludwig Uhland (1787–1862) was a Swabian—a professor, philologist, politician, and writer. In the field of literature he is remembered chiefly for his popular ballad poetry, the outcome of his studies in the folk poetry and saga material of Germany. Franz Grillparzer (1791–1872), Austria's greatest dramatist, has only recently come to be valued at his true worth. His themes were sometimes classic, as in "Sappho" and in his plays dealing with Jason and Medea and with Hero and Leander; and sometimes they entered the field of historical drama. His work is characterized by poetic power and feeling and by fine character development.

Heinrich Heine (1797–1856) belongs both to the Romantic and to the succeeding period. He was born at Düsseldorf, of Jewish parentage, but in early manhood for practical reasons embraced Christianity. At the University of Bonn Heine came under the influence and received the encouragement of A. W. Schlegel; later, at Berlin, he learned much from the philosopher Hegel. His visit to the Harz Mountains was brilliantly described in "Die Harzreise," published in 1826. Heine had become known before this as a writer of poetry, and by the publication of a collection of poems, the "Buch der Lieder," in 1827, became the most popular of German poets. He traveled in England, did editorial work in Munich, made a trip to Italy, lived for a period in Berlin and Hamburg, and finally, troubled by the failure of the 1830 revolution and the continued unfortunate political condition of Germany, went to Paris in 1831. There he made his home thenceforth, supporting himself mainly by journalism. Several collections of his writings were made before he died. There were many contradictions in his nature. He was witty, pessimistic, bitterly cynical, skeptical, sentimental, a lover of France and Germany alike, and neither strongly Jewish nor strongly Christian. His varying moods are reflected in his poems. It seems clear that Heine is the chief German lyric poet since Goethe. He appreciated deeply both the sea and the inland country, and his lyrics contain much symbolism based upon nature. His love poems are tender and poignant. Few men have ever written such melodious verse. As a prose writer he was scarcely less gifted. Hence he has always had many admirers in France, England, and America, as well as in Germany.



HEINRICH HEINE

The Modern Period

The later history of German literature is extraordinarily complex, for the number of German writers since 1830 has been legion, as the reader may discover by referring to any compendium of literature, or as will be quite evident to him if he will recall the German novelists and short-story writers, dramatists, poets, critics, historians, and philosophers of the modern period. However, there has not emerged in Germany a Dickens, a Balzac, a Tolstoy, or a Maupassant, a Sainte-Beuve, or an Ibsen; and it is not therefore our purpose to devote more than passing attention to the later literature, even though in amount and in its average quality it is undeniably impressive, and though it has had much influence upon the other literatures of recent times.

During the two decades following 1830 the strong nationalist feeling in Germany was reflected in the "Young Germany" movement. The impulse of its representatives was political, and the hope was to bring about by means of vigorous and earnest literary propaganda liberal government in the German states. In addition to Heine, who was an ardent champion of the cause, the journalist Börne, the novelist and dramatist Gutzkow, and the critic Laube, to say nothing of a considerable number of poets, such as Mörike, all contributed their part to this movement. The product, viewed as literature, was not especially significant, and the popular hopes were shattered by the reaction following 1848.

Then ensued a period of quiet, with a dominant note of pessimism. The influence of Wilhelm Hegel (1770–1831), the great philosopher who had taken a commanding position in the thought of the earlier part of the century, now gave way to that of the pessimistic philosophy of his opponent Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860). On the whole, fiction and drama were more successful than poetry because more in accord with the demands of the times. The psychological short stories and idyls of Paul Heyse, skillfully conceived and handled,—to say nothing of his plays and lyrics,—proved very popular; also the Low German stories of Fritz Reuter. Theodor Storm's "Immensee" is one of the most pleasing of short

stories in any language and is characteristic of Germany's production in this field. Among novelists of the mid-century a few call for special notice. Friedrich Spielhagen, a very prolific writer, has left a long series of novels as well as dramatic works and miscellaneous writings. Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach, an Austrian novelist, achieved great success in her story of Austrian society life, "Two Countesses," and in later writings. She has a graceful and artistic style, and her psychological studies are particularly effective. Gustav Freytag, esteemed for his work in the dramatic field, especially "Die Journalisten," has left a great social novel in three volumes, "Soll und Haben." Gottfried Keller, a Swiss writer of decidedly original powers, thoroughly artistic and gifted with a strong sense of humor, is honored as a novelist, but perhaps even more as a poet. The most impressive of his poems belong to the period succeeding the Franco-Prussian War. In the field of drama, in addition to several writers already mentioned, Friedrich Hebbel and Otto Ludwig should be named. To this period belong the music dramas of Richard Wagner, to which reference has already been made.

The momentous history of Germany during the years just preceding the Franco-Prussian War, and the establishment of the German empire as the direct outcome of that conflict, had little immediate effect upon literature. Yet there were undercurrents, and since the eighties the flow seems to have become richer and deeper. During this general period the philosophic ideas of both Hegel and Schopenhauer have had less weight, a return to the basic ideas of Kant has been noticeable, and the optimistic and individualistic philosophy of Nietzsche has had its followers in Germany. **Friedrich Nietzsche** (1844–1900) did not live a long life, and the ill health and insanity of his later years checked his work. He had earned before this a great reputation for the brilliance of his style and the unique qualities of his thought. His works have been widely read in Europe and America. "Thus Spake Zarathustra" gives perhaps the most characteristic expression of his philosophy. It seems to be as much poetry as prose, and it is illuminated with flashes of genius. But it may well be questioned whether Germany

has profited by the dissemination of some of the Nietzschean ideas: that all the standards of the past are to be abolished; that altruism and conscience are signs of weakness; that the world can be moved only by deeds, not by tears and repentance; and that the race is to be saved by the "superman," the strong man, who will triumph over common humanity.

The doctrine of Naturalism has found exponents in Germany since 1870, but the movement has taken a different trend from that taken in France. Its general effect has been to awaken Germany and to give an impulse to new theories of art. A series of poets whose best work falls within the limits of this later period must claim our attention. Conrad Ferdinand Meyer and Keller (mentioned above) were both stirred by the events of 1870. Meyer is a Swiss writer who has produced delicate and searching poems written in a highly individual and restrained style. His strength is in the field of the historical poem. Keller has been spoken of as "the most creative spirit that has appeared in modern German literature since Goethe." His style has color and is full of images and metaphors. Detlev von Liliencron was born in North Germany and is of Danish origin. While not an important thinker, he has a vivid and eager style and a rich vocabulary, and his lyrics and ballads are very carefully written. Arno Holz, an East Prussian poet, has not achieved very great popularity, but has had considerable effect upon recent German literature because of his theories of poetry and art. His plays have an extraordinary sense of reality. He has thought of his mission as in the direction of social reform (hence his vivid pictures of the life of the poor), and in the field of literary art his impulse has been to encourage realistic, concise, and sincere expression. German prose, influenced largely by Nietzsche, has had the tendency latterly to rival that of France in richness and flexibility, thus upsetting the traditions of the past. Among recent writers of prose a group of women novelists must not be overlooked. Of these the most conspicuous are Ricarda Huch, a novelist, critic, and historian, and Clara Viebig, an author of novels which present studies in environment. Some of the novelists mentioned above have produced well-known

work in this later period. In addition, a number of others might be named; such, for instance, as Arthur Schnitzler, a versatile writer of fiction and drama, who has achieved considerable popularity for his descriptions of life and for his prose style; and Hermann Bahr, one of the best of German impressionist critics. No writer, however, seems to speak for Germany as a whole, although much work of conspicuous merit is being produced constantly.

In recent decades the theater has become a more important part of life in Germany than in other countries. Among dramatists of our era Germany has produced at least two important representatives —**Hermann Sudermann** (1857–1928) and **Gerhart Hauptmann** (1862–). The Naturalistic drama, to which both have made considerable contributions, is a modern development which has been described in another chapter. Sudermann began his literary career as a novelist; his "Frau Sorge" ("Dame Care") is the best of his stories and one of the foremost of recent German novels. In 1888 "Die Ehre" ("Honor"), his earliest play, appeared and was recognized at once as an achievement. Among his other plays "Sodom's End" and "Heimat" ("Magda," as it is called in its English version) are prominent. The last impresses the reader as one of the best plays in the school which it represents. Sudermann has chosen several vital themes for his dramas and has displayed considerable art as a playwright. Hauptmann, a Silesian, used Silesia for the background of his earliest important play, "The Weavers," which still seems the most striking of his Naturalistic plays. It is hard to forgive him for the gross realism revealed in such a play as "Fuhrmann Henschel." But Hauptmann has proved versatile and original and has tried his hand at several forms of dramatic art. He is at his best in his poetic dramas, "Hannele" and "Die Versunkene Glocke" ("The Sunken Bell"). In the former the sordid picture of life in an almshouse is blended with the beautiful dreams of a dying child. "The Sunken Bell" is a fairy tale in dramatic form, glorified by poetry and imagination, and intended as an allegory to show the tragedy of the artist who cannot adapt himself to his surroundings.

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Translations:

Several good versions of the "Nibelungenlied" are available; for example, the Everyman's Library edition. E. P. Dutton & Company.
The Bohn Library covers a number of German classics in English, including Goethe and Schiller. Harcourt, Brace and Company.
Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister" (Carlyle) (2 vols.). A. C. McClurg & Co.
Goethe's "Faust" (Taylor). Houghton Mifflin Company.
Editions of recent German literature, such as Hauptmann's and Sudermann's plays, are easily obtainable in English.

Suggested Topics

The "Nibelungenlied."
Examples of German folk songs.
Lessing's "Nathan the Wise."
The personality of Schiller.
Schiller's "Wilhelm Tell."
Striking episodes in the life of Goethe.
"Wilhelm Meister."
The Gretchen passages from "Faust."
Philosophy of "Faust."

Goethe's "Iphigenie" compared with Euripides' "Iphigenia."
Heine's poems.
The German philosophers and their influence.
Recent literature of Germany.
Germany's place among the nations.

CHAPTER X

RUSSIAN LITERATURE

It is now one hundred years since Pushkin's first writings appeared. All that is of chief importance in Russian literature has been produced in the interval. Rich as the literature of various nations has proved during the past century, the Russian contribution is unexcelled. Translations have appeared of late years in rapid succession; it is as if a gold mine had been uncovered. The literature of Russia possesses extraordinary vigor, brilliance, simplicity, and reality. What a people! Their genius, their strength and weakness, the pathos of their history, are all vividly disclosed in their literature. To read this literature is to understand the soul of Russia.

The land and the people. A glance at the map will serve to remind the reader of the configuration and physical features of this interesting country. It covers an immense area in eastern Europe. East to the Urals and south to the Caucasus it is almost wholly a plain country with an elevation only a few hundred feet above sea level—marshland to the far north, then wooded stretches, then a great agricultural plain, and, last of all, the steppes of the south. Russia has little seaboard, but its rivers are numerous and include the Volga, the longest in Europe. Its cities, particularly Kiev and Novgorod, Moscow, and Petrograd (formerly St. Petersburg), are famous in Russian history and literature. The reader of the poems and tales of Russia soon receives an indelible impression of the characteristic landscape as it appears in winter and in summer, and of the villages, the country estates, and the manners and customs of the people. He comes to know intimately the life of Moscow and Petrograd; he gets glimpses of the Cossacks on the plains and in their mountain fastnesses; most of all, he meets at every turn

the Russian peasant, that inscrutable and interesting figure, forming by far the largest element among the people of Russia.

Primarily a Slav, the Russian is a descendant of that branch of the Aryan, or Indo-European, race which occupied eastern Europe at a very early period. But there are other racial strains. The Russian people have assimilated a considerable body of Scandinavians, who came as traders and roving adventurers during the Viking period. Of more consequence is the Finnish element, so important an influence as noticeably to modify the Slavic character of the Russian. Situated on the eastern border of Europe, the Russian faces both east and west, and he has been influenced strongly by both Orient and Occident. There came in the thirteenth century disastrous incursions of Tatars (or Tartars),—Mongolian tribes which overran Russia and held for centuries some of the richest portions of the land. This occupation inevitably affected the customs and the language of Russia, though less than might be expected. The Russian is today essentially a Slav and hence an Aryan.

THE KREMLIN, MOSCOW

Not all men, even those of one nation, are cast in the same mold, and it is hazardous to make generalizations. But the Russian seems to have certain pretty well-defined qualities, due perhaps to a common racial blend and to similar climatic conditions and ways of life prevailing over large portions of the country and extending over long ages of history. As a rule the Russian is pacific, human, sincere. Intellectually he is keen and quick-witted, with an extraordinary fondness for argument and discussion. He is by nature

commonly religious, even fatalistic. He is patient and stoical under suffering. Bursts of energy and audacity are quite characteristic of him. He has sympathy for his fellows and for dumb animals, and he lives close to nature and to the facts of life. Absolute frankness and reality and freedom of thought and manners seem to be the rule. Some of his less pleasing traits are the defects of his good qualities. He is apt to be self-indulgent, unoriginal, ill-balanced. Thought does not easily resolve itself into action; Russian Hamlets abound. He lacks initiative and independence, and he is prone to let well enough alone. The indolent Oblomov and the indecisive Rudin are typically Russian. A settled gloom and tragic seriousness permeate the novels of Russian writers—among the major novelists only one, Gogol, may be considered a humorist, and his humor is of a grim and searching nature.[1]

The language. In their early history the Slavs probably spoke only one dialect. The language of the Czechs, the Poles, the Serbians, the Bulgarians, and the Russians (to mention no others) is in its fundamentals the same. Three clearly defined dialects have developed in Russia: Little Russian, spoken by about thirty millions in the southern and southwestern Ukrainian region; White Russian, spoken by eight millions in the northwestern Lithuanian region; and Great Russian, the furthest developed, the literary and written language, spoken by nearly eighty millions—at its purest in the region of Moscow. By the addition of new words from other languages, and by the development of grammatical forms (especially in the skillful hands of Lomonosov in the eighteenth century), the language has undergone considerable change. But at its basis it is the same Slavonian speech current a thousand years ago. All those who know Russian unite in singing its praises. They speak of its sonorous qualities, its elasticity, its wonderful richness in vocabulary, capable of expressing every shade of thought and feeling. "Thou alone," said Turgenev, "art my rod and my staff, O great, mighty, true, and free Russian language! If it were not for

[1] See the excellent analysis of the Russian character given in Maurice Baring's "The Russian People."

thee, how could one keep from despairing at the sight of what is going on at home? But it is inconceivable that such a language should not belong to a great people."

Russia takes over readily the classics of all nations, for it is able to translate into its own speech every type of literature from every language. The intellectual unity of the Russians seems marvelous to us. Their classics, according to Kropotkin, circulate in the villages by millions of copies; and complete sets of special favorites have sold to the extent of two hundred thousand in a single year.

Historical sketch. During its long history Russia has suffered under cruel disabilities. In the early centuries semi-barbarism and anarchy hindered any real progress. The coming of Christianity brought little advance, for the Greek Church fastened Greek legislation and government upon the country, introduced an unchanging ritual, and had the effect of checking for centuries the intellectual life of the people and of holding Russia in its position of half-oriental seclusion. Add to this the Tatar invasion (1238), with the submergence of national life for a long period. It was not until 1462 that domination by this alien people ceased. Only spasmodically did the progress of the West reach Russia. Political and social changes came about with great difficulty. By an unhappy chance the Russian peasant was bound to the soil as a mere serf and did not secure his freedom until after the middle of the nineteenth century. The ruling class was small and completely estranged from the people.

However, under Peter the Great (1672–1725) important advances were made. Peter brought about far-reaching governmental changes, was powerfully influenced by the West, and gave a decided intellectual impulse to his country. Since his day Russia has taken its part increasingly in the history of Europe. Nearly all the Tsars unfortunately proved reactionary, however liberal their tendencies may have been at the beginning of their reigns. Burning indignation against the selfishness and cruelty of the Russian autocracy became inevitable throughout the country. The revolutionary movement as it slowly developed and gained power won the

sympathy of the liberty-loving people of the world. So overmastering an element did this become in the intellectual life of nineteenth-century Russia that many Russian novels and tales were permeated with it and had the effect of being tracts for the times.

And now the Romanov autocracy has gone, and in its place has come something which the devoted leaders of the revolutionary movement could scarcely have foreseen. Russia has not yet worked out her destiny.

The Literature before Pushkin

As in the case of other nations, Russia produced during its early period a large amount of popular oral literature, which, passed on from generation to generation, was finally collected and published. This folk material, in the form of old songs, hero tales, and rude epics, is very rich. The origin of some of the legendary poems, known as *byliny*, and the folk tales, or *skaski*, may possibly be traced to early Aryan days. Others come from Mongol and Turk sources; some are plainly borrowed from Eastern tales; while all parts of Russia, including the Cossack region, and all periods as late as the time of Peter the Great, are represented in these tales. As a revelation of the primitive Russian peasant's ideals and beliefs they are extremely interesting. The *byliny* in general date from the tenth to the twelfth century. At the close of that period they had become thoroughly Russian in character—tales generally of heroes and their adventures, with sometimes magical episodes and with fragments of old myths. While not rhythmical poems in a strict sense, they are imaginative and poetic, and they have been happily termed "history set to music." An attractive collection of the *skaski* bearing the title "Russian Wonder Tales," rendered into English by Post Wheeler, has been recently published.

The early period produced also a large group of annals, or chronicles, dealing with the important city centers and coming mainly from the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries. Kiev, which was for so long the center of Russian culture, contributed the best-known of a long series of annals, entitled the "Chronicle of Nes-

tor." Annalists abounded in all the larger towns; mixed with dry and commonplace happenings, they included curious incidents and quaint old tales. A famous epic narrative, a prose *byliny*, dating from the twelfth century, is known as the "Story of Prince Igor's Raid." It is an original and vivid historical document with highly poetical portions. The tale is concerned with an expedition undertaken by Igor of Novgorod against the Polotsky, a marauding people occupying southeastern Russia; with the unfavorable omens encountered on the way; with the great conflict in which even the dumb animals shared, the defeat and capture of Igor and his men, and, finally, the hero's escape and return. Inferior though it may be to such great folk epics as "The Cid" and the "Song of Roland," it belongs in the same general class.

With the coming of the Tatars the city of Kiev was pillaged and destroyed, and its intellectual influence came temporarily to an end. Moscow became the center of thought, but for a long time very slight cultural advance took place. The Church frowned upon any but Christian writings, and the ecclesiastical literature, though considerable, seems to have had less merit than that of other nations. Not until 1564 was printing introduced into Russia.

While we look in vain for any distinctive literature of a high order in Russia from this period until the nineteenth century, important developments were nevertheless taking place. A new cultural movement—with Kiev again as its center—commenced in the middle of the seventeenth century. The Russian theater was formed and the first Russian newspaper established. Under Peter the Great the Russian vernacular, with a simplified alphabet, became the written, literary language. Lomonosov, who has already been mentioned, introduced important reforms in Russian grammar. The influence of the West became increasingly important. Zhukovsky, himself no mean poet, rendered a great service in making available in the Russian language highly poetical translations of German, English, and classical poems. Karamzin, through his historical writings, did much to develop a national consciousness. Russia by this time had emerged as the great Slavic state and had taken its place among the more important nations of

Europe. The time was ripe for an original and distinctive writer to appear who should give a great impulse to national literature. This writer proved to be Alexander Pushkin.

Pushkin, Lermontov, and Other Poets

Russia, like other European countries, was influenced by the somewhat unreal Classicism of the eighteenth century and, in turn, by the Romantic movement in the early decades of the nineteenth century. The latter, however, as has been pointed out by critics, did not make a strong appeal to the Russian, since it failed to recognize his passion for reality. With the coming of **Pushkin** (1799–1837) Classicism disappeared and Romanticism was soon lost in the powerful simplicity and reality so native and attractive to the Russian character. Pushkin exhibited even in his school days a remarkable poetic fancy, and his teacher Zhukovsky readily acknowledged that the pupil excelled the master. His grandmother and nurse were influential forces in his boyhood and youth. They gave direction to his choice of language—pure, simple, and direct—and to his choice of themes: a rich array of fairy stories, popular tales, and subjects national in scope. When Pushkin was only twenty-one his reputation was made through the publication of "Ruslan and Liudmila." It was Russia's first great poem, a fairy tale written in narrative verse and replete with poetic images.

ALEXANDER PUSHKIN

Because of Pushkin's well-known revolutionary ideas and certain sarcastic epigrams which he wrote touching important personages at court, he was sent in 1820 from St. Petersburg, where he had been educated, to the south of Russia. Here he remained for four years. The Caucasus and the Crimea appealed to him and furnished subjects for some of his choicest lyrics. During this period he was strongly influenced by Byron, and the imaginative youth even felt tempted to join the famous English poet in Greece. In 1824 he was transferred further north to his small family estate. There he produced his best works. Pushkin returned to city life in 1826, settled in Moscow, and held a court position. His life there was not happy, and its effect on his production was unfavorable, though the historic drama "Boris Godunov," one of his chief works, was written during this period. He married in 1831 a beautiful woman who was unappreciative of his genius. It was in 1837 that on her account he fought a duel and lost his life.

Pushkin's strength lies in a straightforward expression of feeling, a simplicity akin to that of Wordsworth, a beautiful poetic fancy, —especially in love themes,—and a fine, sympathetic nature and personality. If he had had greater depth of feeling and more exalted ideas and had chosen themes of universal interest, he might conceivably have become a great world poet. In his own country his striking lyrical faculty, the harmony of his verses, and the simple character sketches and pictures of Russian life in his narrative poems have made him a universal favorite. Of his poems "Eugene Onyegin" is regarded as his masterpiece. The foundation of this novel in verse was laid when Pushkin lived in the neighborhood of Odessa. The story itself is attractively developed, with picturesque details and a characteristic lightness of touch. Tatyana, the great figure of the poem, is the first of a long series of noble women who glorify the pages of Russian literature.

The poems of Pushkin have never been adequately translated into English, though the reader will find interesting extracts in Leo Wiener's "Anthology of Russian Literature" and in Jarintzov's "Russian Poets and Poems." A translation of Pushkin's chief prose tale, "The Captain's Daughter," appeared some years ago. The

story is semi-romantic in subject. Though it possesses a certain attractiveness, it is completely obscured by the greater tales that appeared immediately after Pushkin's day.

Lermontov (1814–1841) is a less impressive figure than Pushkin, but considering that his literary work was confined to eight brief years, the product is notable. His mother died when he was very young, and he was brought up by his grandmother. At Moscow, where he went in 1826 to complete his education, he proved a poetic youth,—solitary, passionate, deriving his inspiration from Schiller and Shakespeare, Shelley and Byron. His university career was closed abruptly because of difficulties with his superiors; he was transferred to a military school at St. Petersburg and became in due time an officer. In 1837 he electrified the nation by a revolutionary poem addressed to the Tsar on the death of the poet Pushkin. All Russia learned the poem by heart, but the government authorities sent the young poet on military duty to the Caucasus as a punishment. This region cast a spell over Lermontov; he described it in poems of great beauty. Possessing a nature essentially serious and even pessimistic, Lermontov voiced in his poems a protest against the evils of the life of his day and at the same time a burning desire for the development of the choicer qualities in man. His poetry is not so simple as that of Pushkin, but it is more thoughtful and intense. He published in 1840 a small collection of his poems. A short time before this he had been allowed to return to St. Petersburg. Here he wrote "A Hero of Our Time," a remarkable novel which may be read in an excellent English translation—the story of a contemptuous egotist, Petchorin, "the portrait," as the author stated, "of the vices of our generation." Its brilliant pictures of the Caucasus and its vivid character sketches give it a distinction that every reader must appreciate. Lermontov was banished to the Caucasus a second time in 1840 because of his participation in a duel, and there the following year, in a duel with a fellow officer, he lost his life at the early age of twenty-seven. Lermontov's poetry finds its finest expression in his two narrative poems "The Demon" and "Mtsyri," both of which stand in the very front rank of Russian poetry.

In our restricted limits it is impossible to dwell upon the work of such Russian poets as Krylov (1768–1844), writer of fables in verse; Koltsov (1809–1842), poet of peasant life and of the down-trodden people of Russia; Nikitin (1824–1861), writer of graceful and emotional verses; and Alexei Tolstoy (1817–1875), gifted in various directions and famous for his folk songs and legends. Their poetry is justly honored, and will be known before long, no doubt, in suitable English translations. Nekrasov (1821–1877) is probably the greatest of the later Russian poets. Dostoevsky placed him by the side of Pushkin and Lermontov, yet he has not the poetic power of either. His place is due to his sincerity and realism, his analytical strength, his elevation of thought, and his deep feeling of commiseration for the Russian peasant. He has written a number of short lyrics. His longer poems "Red-Nosed Frost," "Russian Women," and especially "Who Lives Well in Russia" are notable.

Gogol and Goncharov

Nikolai Gogol. The genius of the Russian race has expressed itself chiefly in the novel. To Nikolai Gogol, the first of the great line of Russian novelists, we now turn our attention. Almost alone among Russian writers Gogol is a humorist: he constantly mingles comedy with tragedy. The reader of his writings carries away with him also the impression of his versatility. Gogol excelled in four fields of literary art. He produced in "The Cloak" a little masterpiece, the progenitor of a host of other Russian short stories; in "The Inspector-General" ("Revizor") he wrote a finished comedy, one of the very few plays of his nation that are known internationally; in "Taras Bulba" he offered a prose romance, or historical novel, of almost epic power and strength; and in "Dead Souls" he gave to Russia its first great realistic novel.

Gogol was born in Little Russia in 1809 and died in Moscow in 1852. The influence of Little Russia is seen throughout his writings. He was imbued with the poetry and life of the Ukrainian region, and he made its historical legends his own. At the age of

nineteen he went to St. Petersburg. After a good deal of uncertainty as to his career, and a brief term as professor of history, he devoted himself entirely to literature. His first volume of stories of Little Russian life appeared in 1831, followed shortly after by another collection. His themes were drawn in large part from peasant life. The first collection is almost entirely humorous, while the second shows Gogol's natural bent toward Realism. A third collection deals with Great Russian life, and this includes "The Cloak," which has already been mentioned. In the writing of "Taras Bulba" Gogol was to some extent under the influence of the Romantic school. "The Inspector-General" proved a great success, being witnessed and approved by even the Tsar; but because of certain opposition to his theories of art Gogol decided to live abroad. For a long period he dwelt in Rome and elsewhere. For fifteen years he worked intermittently on "Dead Souls" and even then left it unfinished. A strange development in his later years, the acceptance of a mystical and ascetic view of life, led him to deprecate his literary productions, and he wantonly destroyed the second part of "Dead Souls." He made in 1848 a journey to Jerusalem, and then returned to Russia and settled in Moscow, where he died a few years later.

The strength of Gogol consists in his natural and genuine wit and humor, his acute observation, his power in presenting a great many types of Russian people, and his graphic realism. All of Gogol's chief works have been widely read in English. "The Cloak," the story of a poor clerk who by dint of many sacrifices accumulated a sufficient store of money to buy a new cloak, only to have it stolen on the day that he first appeared in it publicly, touches the sympathetic imagination of all readers. "Taras Bulba" presents in its hero the figure of a great fighting man who shared in the defense of Russia against the Turks in the fifteenth century. Taras is fated to take the life of one of his sons by his own hand and to witness the execution of the other. He himself perishes at the stake. It is hard to convey the tremendous power of such a book as this.[1]

[1] No reader of this book will fail to sympathize with the steward on the river boat, as described in Gorky's autobiography. The small Gorky had been reading aloud Gogol's famous novel. "When Taras killed his son, the

Gogol himself has described his purpose in writing "The Inspector-General." "I tried to gather in one heap all that was bad in Russia, as I then understood it; I wished to turn it all to ridicule. The real impression produced then was fear. Through the laughter that I have never laughed more loudly, the spectator feels my bitterness and sorrow." The plot is very skillfully developed, and the interest is sustained. In the town where the scene of the story is laid, various officials are in a state of alarm over the approaching visit of the Inspector, who is expected to arrive incognito and investigate the local administration. The humor of the play consists in a misunderstanding as to the identity of the Inspector and in the sport which the supposed public official makes of the functionaries of the small town.

The theme of "Dead Souls" was suggested by the poet Pushkin. Chichikov, the central figure, is a true adventurer and promoter of the type familiar to us in America. He conceives the idea of buying up the names of serfs who have died since the last registration of serfs in the various country estates. The advantage to the owner of the serfs is that with the transference of the names from his own list he will no longer have to pay the tax upon these individuals. The advantage to Chichikov is that, having secured a list of duly authenticated serfs' names, he will be able to attach them to the new estate which he expects to acquire, and thus may borrow on his property in land and souls a sum of money for his own purposes. However, this is the mere frame of the story. The interest consists in the reaction of the various landowners to Chichikov's proposition and in the extraordinarily vivid pictures of Russian life and character in the various districts which the adventurer reaches. As in other famous books,—the Odyssey, "Don Quixote," "Gil Blas," and others,—the scene of "Dead Souls" is constantly being changed, opening up new and entertaining matter at every turn. Gogol's humor is mingled with irony and satire. There is much

cook let his feet slip from the hammock, bent himself double, and wept. The tears trickled down his cheeks, splashed upon the deck as he breathed stertorously and muttered, 'Oh, my God! my God! It is a fine book, a regular treat.'"

food for thought in "Dead Souls." One feels that it is in a sense Gogol's autobiography. His keen arraignment of Russia and his indignation at the conditions which he found in the life of the people dominate even the plot. The comment which Pushkin made when he read the manuscript of "Dead Souls" is famous: "God! what a sad country is Russia! Gogol invents nothing: it is the truth, the terrible truth."

Goncharov (1812–1891), the writer of an excellent book of travel, some sketches, and a few novels, is remembered chiefly for his novel "Oblomov," which has recently been translated into English and makes interesting reading. Oblomov is cursed with the spirit of indolence, which characterizes his life on his estate and in the capital. Even his love for the splendid young woman Olga fails to arouse him from his inaction. We leave him as we found him, a prey to inner brooding and the willing victim of sloth. The really incredible success of this book makes it clear that Goncharov succeeded admirably in depicting a distinctive trait of the Russian people; but it is more than local in its significance—it calls attention to a type existing in every country, a product of modern civilization.

"Oblomov," like "Dead Souls," is a striking and early example of Russian Realism. It is fair to ask ourselves at this point the meaning of the term. Kropotkin is authority for the statement that among the Russians "Realism could not be limited to a mere anatomy of society: it had to have a higher background; the realistic description had to be made subservient to an idealistic aim." The Russian novel has been influenced by foreign literature, but it is none the less a strikingly indigenous product. Ordinarily plot structure does not concern Russian writers nearly as much as sincere utterance, a picture of living experiences told with the greatest freedom and simplicity. In the words of a recent critic: "Literary productions called by their authors a story or a novel are quite often neither one nor the other. They are just a morsel of real life, an illuminating episode, a study in human character, or a string of such episodes and studies loosely connected. The Russian reader and the Russian critic were looking for the truthfulness and spiritual depth of a work rather than for its external perfection."

Turgenev

By tradition, and doubtless by strict justice, the great outstanding figures in Russian literature are Turgenev, Dostoevsky, and Tolstoy, men very different in genius, impulse, and method. Of these three Turgenev displays the most thoroughgoing culture and the surest artistry. His literary production covered a period of over thirty years. At times misunderstood, both at home and abroad, his place among the leading writers of nineteenth-century Europe now seems assured.

IVAN TURGENEV

Ivan Turgenev (1818–1883) was born in Orel, central Russia. His father was a landowner with a large establishment of serfs. Turgenev early found himself out of sympathy with the landowning class, and his writings were influential in bringing about the emancipation of the serfs. He was educated in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Berlin. Like most of his fellow countrymen, he proved a natural linguist and early felt at home in the literature and culture of Europe. Goethe was a special favorite of his; it is said that he memorized the whole of the First Part of "Faust." Turgenev's fame as a writer began with the publication (1845–1857) of "Annals of a Sportsman." The sympathetic pictures in this volume of the lives of the serfs made a deep impression upon Russia. In 1852, because of some remarks made against the official class in a eulogistic essay on Gogol, he was banished to his estate. Although later allowed to return to Russian cultural centers, he spent nearly the whole of the

remainder of his life in various parts of western Europe, particularly in Paris. In some ways this expatriation proved an advantage to his genius, as he was enabled to study Russia at long range and to write dispassionately. Moreover, his lengthy residence in Paris served to make Russia known in Western centers of culture.

Those who remember Turgenev's personal appearance speak of his refinement, of his gentleness, and of his sad countenance. He was nobly built and gave the impression of a quiet strength of body and mind. Always instinctively modest, there was no jealousy in his disposition. He is said to have shouted "Hurrah!" when Tolstoy's "Sevastopol" appeared and to have drunk his younger rival's health. Years later, after a long period of estrangement, he sent to Tolstoy one of the most generous and gracious letters ever written by one literary man to another:

"I am on my death-bed; there is no possibility of my recovery. I write you expressly to tell you how happy I have been to be your contemporary, and to utter my last, my earnest prayer. Come back, my friend, to your literary labors. That gift came to you from the source from which all comes to us. Ah, how happy I should be could I think you would listen to my entreaty! My friend, great writer of our Russian land, respond to it, obey it!"

Turgenev's life covered a most tragic period of Russian history, and his writings reflect a deep melancholy. The Danish critic Georg Brandes points out that Turgenev's personality "is always sadness—a specific sadness without a trace of sentimentality. . . . Turgenev's melancholy is, in its substance, the melancholy of the Slavonian races; in its weakness and tragical aspect, it is a descendant in a straight line from the melancholy of the Slavonian folk song." In his novels the passion of love is, broadly speaking, the chief motive. He made a close study of the human heart, and he possessed a marvelous understanding of the impulses of both men and women. Turgenev is instinct with poetry and imagination—more so than any other Russian novelist. There is little of the fantastic in his themes. He paints all classes of the Russian people impartially; in his study of the peasant—his piety, his simplicity, his patience, his unhappiness—he is especially successful. He draws

wonderful pictures of Russia, its aspect in summer and winter, the earth, the field, the forest, the vast stretches of open country.

The English edition of Turgenev's writings comprises some eleven volumes of sketches, short stories, and novels. Those who enjoy reading all of a writer's books will feel richly repaid in undertaking Turgenev and will find that his work is more equal and consistent than, for example, that of Hugo and Balzac or Scott and Thackeray. His novels, to be sure, are novels of character rather than of incident, and each, generally speaking, is a succession of scenes designed to further the reader's understanding of the characters.

Six novels, the earliest written in 1855 and the latest in 1876, are generally considered Turgenev's chief works. We name them in the order in which Turgenev himself wished them to be read: "Rudin," "A Nobleman's Nest," "On the Eve," "Fathers and Children," "Smoke," and "Virgin Soil." Another, though not quite belonging to this succession, has equal merit—"Spring Freshets." Of these seven novels, "Fathers and Children," while not the most pleasing, stands out as Turgenev's masterpiece. The characters in these famous stories typify the Russian people in their strength and weakness. But they are more than types—they are men and women of flesh and blood, and they dominate the scene, for better or for worse, just as surely, for instance, as does Becky Sharp in "Vanity Fair." The mere titles of Turgenev's novels will bring to the reader's mind a number of unforgetable scenes and a number of wonderfully drawn characters: Rudin the weak-willed, Lavretsky, Insarov, Bazarov, and Nezhdanov; and among the remarkable women characters, Natalya, Elena, Gemma, Marianna, and, most pleasing of all, the pure and gentle Lisa. Our list is of course far from complete. The genius of Turgenev is nowhere more marked than in the skillful manner in which one character appears as a foil to another, as Bazarov and Arkady in "Fathers and Children," Nezhdanov and Solomin in "Virgin Soil," and, quite marvelously, the simple-minded Italian girl Gemma and the designing and crafty Maria in "Spring Freshets." Turgenev has created a great gallery of full-length portraits of real men and women.

Dostoevsky

Feodor Dostoevsky (1821–1881) owed much to his parents, who were people of probity, devoutly religious and well educated. His home was in Moscow; during his boyhood he spent his summers in the country, where he learned to love nature and to appreciate the calm endurance of the Russian peasant; he secured a good education, including three years in St. Petersburg in the government school of engineers. All these things were assets; but he labored under terrible handicaps, and his was on the whole a sad and tragic life. From his youth to his old age he knew the cruel pressure of poverty, debt, and anxiety. Constant ill health, epileptic attacks, and mental suffering were his portion. When the French critic Vogüé saw him at the close of his life he described him as "short, lean, neurotic, worn and bowed down with sixty years of misfortune. . . . Eyelids, lips, and every muscle of his face twitched nervously the whole time. When he became excited on a certain point, one could have sworn that one had seen him before seated on a bench in a police court awaiting trial, or among vagabonds who passed their time begging before the prison doors. At all other times he carried that look of sad and gentle meekness seen on the images of old Slavonic saints." The accompanying portrait of Dostoevsky seems to bear out this description.

FEODOR DOSTOEVSKY

When Dostoevsky was twenty-four he wrote "Poor People," a novel in the form of letters. "I wrote it," he said later, "with passion and almost with tears." Capable judges, like Nekrasov and the critic Bylinsky, felt its power; their enthusiasm was that of all the reading public of Russia on the appearance of the book. But Dostoevsky's numerous writings in the years that immediately followed brought him no added fame. Then came a serious personal catastrophe. In April, 1849, he was arrested for participating in socialistic discussions, and after eight months in prison was tried and with twenty-one others condemned to death. He later described the terrific moment when he stood in front of the scaffold awaiting his turn. The Tsar at the last minute commuted the sentence to "four years at forced labor in prison; after that, to serve as a common soldier." In Siberia he was a member of a chain gang and was thrown with the lowest criminals and assassins. When, in 1859, after his military service, he returned to Russia, Dostoevsky had had his baptism of fire and in all essentials was what he continued to be to the end of his life. He had a delicate, sensitive organism; he was without pride or envy or scorn; he possessed a deeply religious nature, a warm and generous heart, genuine pity and sympathy for all downtrodden and outcast men and women, a natural love for children. It should also be said, on the other hand, that he had a strain of morbidness and incoherence and an uncanny interest in moral and psychical disease that tempted him to analyze the mental processes of the most repulsive types of mankind.

"Memoirs from the House of Death" (1858), the realistic account of Dostoevsky's experiences in Siberia, was followed by many other writings, including the chief works of his later years: "Crime and Punishment" (1866), "The Idiot" (1868), and "The Brothers Karamazov" (1879–1880), which was left unfinished at his death. In 1880 his oration on Pushkin, prepared for the unveiling of the poet's monument in Moscow, gave Dostoevsky the greatest literary ovation that had been known in Russia. When he died the next year, a great concourse of forty thousand persons from all ranks of society followed his coffin to the grave.

Dostoevsky is not a literary artist. He breaks every canon of taste. He is slovenly, verbose, sensational, fantastic, and frequently unwholesome. He did not attempt to draw a picture of the peasant; his views of aristocratic life are unconvincing. Circumstances forced him to write under constant pressure; he has the journalist's faults and the journalist's style. But he carries along with him in all his writings a sense of power that is all but unequaled. It may be futile to compare him with writers of his own and other nations. However, Dostoevsky at his highest level is an extraordinary writer and thinker, who introduces in all of his best works passages of pure genius, deep insight, rare beauty. The reader of such a book as "Crime and Punishment," generally regarded as his masterpiece, is in a breathless state most of the time, for the subject, the succession of events, the characters (especially the central figure Raskolnikov), seem to transcend everything in his experience.

"The room was filling, the door stood open, and on the landing and on the stairs here, there, everywhere—people, living people, they looked, looked on in silence. His heart stood still, his feet were leaden—he wished to cry, and woke. He breathed with an effort, but he fancied he was still dreaming, when he perceived, in the doorway of his room, a man whom he had never seen before, and who was carefully watching him. Raskolnikov had not as yet had time to open his eyes wide before he once more closed them. Lying on his back he scarcely moved. 'Am I still dreaming?' he thought, and gently raised his eyelids to cast a timid glance at the stranger. The latter, continuing in the same place, went on with his inspection. Suddenly he entered, gently closed the door behind him, approached the table, and, after a moment's interval, sat down quietly on a chair near the couch. During the whole time he had not taken his eyes off Raskolnikov."

Speaking of "Crime and Punishment" in one of his letters Lafcadio Hearn says: "It is a crucifying thing to read, but it goes down to the deepest fibers in a man's heart." The punishment, as the reader feels instinctively, begins before Raskolnikov commits the dastardly crime, and it continues until he gives himself up to justice. Sonia also makes a deep impression—Sonia, the soiled but pure maiden

whose sad life is a series of sacrifices. In "The Brothers Karamazov," which at points surpasses anything in "Crime and Punishment," the character of Aloysha is drawn with consummate skill. The book was the result of ten years of thought on the part of the author.

Evelyn Underhill's sonnet "On Reading Dostoevsky" seems to sum up the whole matter:

"Here's a new soul unveiled, all trembling fire;
As fire unstable, eager, tender, fierce;
With sudden pains our sodden thought to pierce
And lights and ardors apt for all desire.
Here's sordid, holy man, all mind and mire,
Deep wells are here for storing of slow tears,
Grey sterile tracks down-trodden by hard years,
Quick saving dreams that from the slime aspire.

"And as some tarnished mirror full of flaws,
Strange crooked faults, deep cracks that twist the rays,
May catch the sunny splendor, and because
Of those same scars, flash back a sparkling light;
So, keen and fair, to mock our scornful sight,
This broken glass the Kingly Face displays."

Tolstoy

Henry James has said, "The perusal of Tolstoy—a wonderful mass of life—is an immense event, a kind of splendid accident, for each of us." Since Goethe there has been no such commanding figure in Europe. Tolstoy possesses a universality that Goethe with all his superb gifts lacks. Furthermore, he belongs to our own times, and though we may not accept fully his political, social, and religious ideas, a study of his writings is like taking an intellectual and spiritual tonic. The literary work of many other leading nineteenth-century writers can be spared sooner than that of Tolstoy. Kropotkin remarks:

"He has fearlessly stated the moral aspects of all the burning questions of the day, in a form so deeply impressive that whoever has read any one of his writings can no longer forget these questions or set them

aside; one feels the necessity of finding, in one way or another, some solution. Tolstoy's influence, consequently, is not one which may be measured by mere years or decades of years: it will last long."

Leo Tolstoy was born at Yasnaya Polyana, in the province of Tula in south-central Russia, August 28, 1828. His parents died early; his upbringing and education were left mainly to an aunt. The boy was plain in appearance, of a highly sensitive nature, and proved an omnivorous reader. An illuminating picture of these early days is afforded in "Childhood," "Boyhood," and "Youth," three autobiographical sketches which he wrote later. At the age of fifteen he entered the University of Kazan—not a fortunate choice, for scarcely one of his professors proved capable. The boy had, however, developed a marked individuality. His reading included French, English, and American books as well as Russian. In 1847 he went to St. Petersburg and entered the department of law in the university there. His diary and other documents give us full information regarding the inner conflict of those years: his gambling, sensuality, and other vices are as frankly mentioned as his nobler impulses. Tolstoy shook himself free from city life in 1851 and visited the Caucasus, where he joined an artillery regiment and saw service in a small way in that region and later on a larger

LEO TOLSTOY

scale in Sevastopol during the Crimean War. His hand-to-hand experiences with modern warfare are realistically described in the sketches which brought him his first success as an author.

After resigning from the service Tolstoy returned to St. Petersburg, where, as a literary lion, he mixed in the gay life of the capital, disturbed, however, by prolonged fits of mental unrest. He took a genuine interest in the Russian popular movement, which was at that time gaining rapid headway, and he sought in foreign travel to enlarge his ideas and education. Before long he was settled on his country estate, which he made his home during the entire subsequent period of his life. Tolstoy's understanding of the Russian peasants and his disinterested service in their behalf are very interesting features in his career; he taught the peasant much, but the contribution of the peasant to his own thought was even more significant.

Tolstoy's marriage in his thirty-fourth year to Sophia Behrs was the most momentous step of his life. The years that followed were full of activity, devoted to his home life, to work on his estate, and to his literary labors. "War and Peace" (1865–1868) and "Anna Karenina" (1875–1878), his chief works, were the fruit of those years.

Then came a remarkable development in Tolstoy's inner life. After innumerable mental struggles and the most searching examination of his entire philosophy of life, he accepted with the greatest completeness the practical teachings of the Gospel of Jesus, and in due time renounced the life of his own class and lived the life of a peasant. His writings lost none of their simplicity and beauty of literary expression, but he was now concerned with religious autobiography, philosophy, political and social tracts, short stories and dramas with a purpose, and peasant tales designed to aid the common people. After a long period he produced, in 1899, another powerful novel, "Resurrection," written to aid the Doukhobors, a Russian sect with pacifist convictions. Tolstoy was now universally honored, and the portrait of his rugged patriarchal figure in peasant costume was well known throughout Europe and America. He died November 20, 1910, a few days after he had

left home on a journey undertaken with the idea of ending his life in complete retirement, such as his home could not furnish.

Any study of Tolstoy, undertaken even on a small scale, must inevitably devote attention to some of his characteristic ideas. He believed in the dignity and necessity of labor. "Let us work," he said, "with all our might physically, and struggle with the forces of nature for the maintenance of our own lives and the lives of others." Acting upon this conviction, he devoted much time to simple manual labor. "No man," says William Dean Howells, "so gloriously gifted and so splendidly placed has bowed his neck and taken the yoke upon it. We must recognize Tolstoy as one of the greatest men of all time, before we can measure the extent of his renunciation. He was gifted, noble, rich, famous, honored, courted; and he has done his utmost to become plebeian, poor, obscure, neglected." Add to this Tolstoy's distinct altruistic purpose: "The whole aim of life," he said, "is self-sacrificing labor for others." This doctrine is set forth winsomely at many points in his writings; for example, in his short stories "Where Love is, there God is Also" and "The Two Old Men." He was following, of course, the teachings of Jesus in this, as in many other particulars. He urged the recognition of the equality of all men; he taught nonresistance, a life free from anger and passion and full of love. From his study of religious and ethical beliefs of various periods he worked out more simply and naturally than any man of his time the elements of a universal religion.

Tolstoy in "The Cossacks" and elsewhere displays his dislike for the artificial life of the city and his delight in the freedom of nature. In "Sevastopol," and again at greater length in "War and Peace," he sets forth his conception of war and of history. A number of his writings are thinly disguised tracts against wealth and aristocracy. An organized State and an organized Church were alike distasteful to him; he was instinctively an anarchist and a dissenter. "Resurrection" conveys a powerful judgment passed on the existing institutions of modern life. In "The Kreutzer Sonata" most strikingly, but at many other places in his writings as well, Tolstoy explains his attitude toward love and marriage. Again we quote Howells:

"In most other novelists, passion is treated as if it were something important in itself,—as if its intensity were a merit and its abandon were a virtue, its fruition Paradise, its defeat perdition. But in Tolstoy, almost for the first time, we are shown that passion is merely a condition and that it has almost nothing to do with happiness."

The mere magnitude of Tolstoy's writings renders it difficult for the reader to make a suitable selection. Of the early works "Childhood," "Boyhood," "Youth," and "The Cossacks" are perhaps the most rewarding. Those who wish to learn the essence of Tolstoy's religious conceptions should read "Confession," "My Faith," "What is to be Done," and "Christian Teaching," in the order named. Among Tolstoy's justly celebrated short stories are the two already named above and "Master and Man" and "How Much Land is Required for a Man"; but almost all his short stories and tales are significant. Tolstoy's three great novels are his chief claim to distinction as a writer. "War and Peace," a veritable leviathan, as one of his interpreters calls it, fills six considerable volumes and is the most impressive of all historical novels. It gathers together the innumerable details of Russian life and describes with great particularity and vividness the history of the early nineteenth century. The masses are frankly presented as of more importance than war heroes. With its hundred or more clearly differentiated characters it gives the effect of a vast panorama. Kropotkin tells us that the reading of nearly every scene of the book is for educated Russians "a source of indescribable æsthetic pleasure." When the novel "Resurrection" appeared, Tolstoy was over seventy years of age, but it is a marvelous work showing the author's splendid creative powers unimpaired. The hero, Nekludov, called upon to serve as a juror, discovers in the criminal at the bar the woman he had betrayed in his youth. Believing himself responsible for her downfall and for all the evils of her life, he resolves to share her fate and he accompanies her to Siberia. Such is the theme of this moving and pathetic story.

"Anna Karenina," the novel produced in Tolstoy's middle years, is considered by common consent his masterpiece. Few will deny it a place among the chief novels of the world. "I believe," says

Professor William Lyon Phelps, "that the average man can learn more about life by reading 'Anna Karenina' than he can by his own observations and experience." Most of its characters were taken from life, and every page has a reality that is unescapable. Levin is clearly Tolstoy, without apology or extenuation. It is easy to find fault with the work on the score that it is too diffuse; that the plot hangs but loosely together; that the author obtrudes his own ideas too frequently; that physical matters related to the characters, such as cracking knuckles, outstanding ears, lifted eyebrows, blushes, the hideous details of illness, etc., are dwelt upon more than is fitting; that the Kitty and Levin passages are on too commonplace a level; and that incidents which may be expected to lead to something important end nowhere. But the reader soon finds that this great work is a piece of life itself, and it dwells in his memory as something that belongs to his own personal career. Tolstoy is at home in describing all classes of society. We encounter in the book aristocracy at its best, and again that of the worst, most doubtful, and most depraved type. City life in Moscow and St. Petersburg is described, with balls, receptions, clubs, theaters, races, debts. There are married happiness and married unhappiness. The summer outing place, the country home, the problems of the farm, the delight in the land and the produce of the land,—all these matters are faithfully described. We get a powerful impression also of the drudgery of life, the dullness of the peasant, the agony of the soul approaching death, the great sacrifices of even lowly folk, the pitiful domestic tragedies of the mismated. Above all, Anna herself, as she passes from happiness to disillusion, approaching misery, and ultimate destruction, engages the reader's deepest interest and sympathy. Endowed as Anna is with beauty, rich personal gifts, and social position, life to her (as the story opens) is dull enough, and her emotional nature is starved. At Moscow she meets the young, brilliant, handsome officer Vronsky. Life now opens up surprising vistas. Back at home again, she cannot help contrasting her middle-aged husband Karenin, absurdly commonplace and proper, with her new-found friend. By slow degrees her duty to Karenin and her love for her son seem less important and are lost in the

overwhelming experience that offers itself. But in Italy, where she and Vronsky seek asylum, there come doubt, and a loss of security, and homesickness. Happiness hangs on a thread. A hasty return and a stolen interview with her son only accentuate her difficulties. She feels that her old life is lost, that Vronsky's love is uncertain, that her ideals are crushed, and that suicide is the only solution to the terrible enigma of her life. The opportunity comes as she stands in hopeless misery beside the moving train.

"'There,' she said, looking at the shadow of the car thrown upon the black coal-dust which covered the sleepers, 'there, in the center; he will be punished, and I shall be delivered from it all . . . and from myself.'

"She was going to throw herself under the first car as its center came opposite where she stood. Her little red traveling-bag caused her to lose the moment; she could not detach it from her arm. She awaited the second. A feeling like that she had experienced once, just before taking a dive in the river, came over her, and she made the sign of the cross. This familiar gesture called back to her soul a whole series of memories of her youth and childhood; and suddenly the darkness which hid everything from her was torn asunder. Life, with its elusive joys, glowed for an instant before her. But she did not take her eyes from the car; and when the center, between the two wheels, appeared, she threw away her red bag, drawing her head between her shoulders, and, with outstretched hands, threw herself on her knees under the car. For a second she was horror-struck at what she was doing.

"'Where am I? What am I doing? Why?'

"She tried to get up, to draw back; but something monstrous, inflexible, struck her head and threw her on her back.

"'Lord, forgive me all!' she murmured, feeling the struggle to be in vain.

"A little muzhik was working on the railroad, mumbling in his beard.

"And the candle by which she had read the book that was filled with fears, with deceptions, with anguish, and with evil, flared up with greater brightness than she had ever known, revealing to her all that before was in darkness, then flickered, grew faint, and went out forever."

Other Forms of Literature

The drama, long a popular form of art in Russia, developed rapidly in the nineteenth century. Griboedov (1795–1829) gave to Russia its earliest native comedy of first-rate importance—"The Woes of Wit," which appeared by a singular chance the same year (1825) as Pushkin's historic drama "Boris Godunov." Griboedov's comedy is deeply satirical and is leveled against the Moscow society of his day. It is cleverly developed, and written in pure Russian; it remains a favorite in Russia to this day. Ostrovsky (1823–1886), the greatest dramatist of his country, produced about fifty dramas and comedies, of which two are of special significance—"Poverty is No Crime," a human and realistic play, and "The Storm," a powerful drama almost perfect in craftsmanship, essentially Russian but with universal qualities. The character of Katharine in the latter play is a profound study. Mention has already been made of Gogol's "The Inspector-General." Turgenev wrote five lively comedies, and Tolstoy two somber tragedies. Alexei Tolstoy's three historic tragedies, forming a trilogy, have both romantic and realistic elements. Among recent dramatists Potekhin (1829–1902), a writer of comedies, and Chekhov and Gorky have an honorable place. The last two writers are better known in other fields, but Chekhov's "Cherry Orchard," Gorky's "The Lower Depths," and a few of Andreev's plays are extraordinary productions, esteemed in Russia and elsewhere.

As Russia is a land of thinking men, it is not surprising that literary criticism has had many exponents. Among critics Bylinsky (1811–1848) towers above the rest. Philosophy, history, and literary art were his natural fields. Not only was he a critic of great moment in his day and a great master of style but a man of noble character. His successors numbered some gifted men, but they cannot receive attention in our brief sketch. However, Merejkowski and Kropotkin, because of their Russian literary criticism so widely read in English translations, certainly deserve mention. Kropotkin's "Ideals and Realities in Russian Literature" is a work almost perfect in its kind.

Among political writers Herzen (1812–1870) took an important place. He was a profound thinker and a revolutionist. He proved an influential force among Russians through his journalistic work in Paris and London. His memoirs, "Past Facts and Thoughts," are valuable historically and are remarkable for their many literary excellences. Tchernyshevsky (1828–1889), another indefatigable worker in the cause of Russian freedom, wrote voluminously. He was useful as an economist and educator. His story "What is to be Done?" written in prison, more of an economic document than a novel, has had an enormous circulation.

Recent Novelists

The list of Russian writers during the recent period is a long one; we can refer to only a few.

Anton Chekhov (1860–1904), a native of south Russia, well educated, a member of the medical profession, a generous-hearted, fun-loving man, whose brief career was marked by kindly deeds, has left a large number of stories and plays. It may still be too early to determine his place in the Russian pantheon of letters, but he has many admirers throughout Europe and America and is considered widely as Russia's foremost short-story writer. One must not expect to find, as a rule, a lightsome quality in Chekhov's stories—he reflects the prevailing gloom of his time. He has wonderful descriptive power and the skill to compress much into a few lines. With the true realism of the Russian he paints a picture of life as he sees it. Horror, misery, suffering, find a place in the picture inevitably, but also imagination, humor, the love of nature, and the love of children. The reader would do well to run over a collection of Chekhov's stories in order to see his range of characters and subjects and his great skill as a story-teller. "Ward Number Six," "The Steppe," "A Tiresome Story," "The Darling," "At Home," "The Black Monk," and others of his stories are well known.

At the close of the nineteenth century the so-called Modernist movement, sponsored by a group of writers of similar aims, became

influential in Russia. The Modernist, as defined by the critic Olgin, is egoistic, spreads the gospel of beauty for beauty's sake, has a lack of interest in social problems, which he considers of minor importance, and is attracted to religious thought. Merejkowski (already mentioned above) and the short-story writer Sologub belong to this circle of Modernists. The movement has latterly changed its character and become obscured in the tremendous onrush of recent thought. With the beginning of the new century, and especially with the revolution of 1905, another period of Russian literature seems to have been ushered in; and this has not lost its force, though the startling events of 1917 have changed its current.

Our study of Russian literature will close with a brief study of a few writers of the twentieth century.

Maxim Gorky (his actual name is Aleksei M. Pyeshkof) was born in 1868 and began to make himself known in literature before the close of the century. His early years were years of vagabondage, and he has introduced the vagabond into Russian literature. The very cleverness and novelty of his work gave him for a time an extraordinary position. We take a more tempered view of him in these days. But Gorky has not yet finished his work, and final judgment upon him cannot be passed. He is a striking figure personally; at times he has been influential in the councils of Russia. Gorky has written much. His longer novels are not so successful as his short stories. There is much of bitterness and disgust and revolt, much of the sordid and bestial and hideous, in his pictures. Yet this does not tell the whole story. His play "The Lower Depths" is powerful to a degree; some of his short stories—for example, "Her Lover"—are justly admired; and the recent publication of two volumes of his autobiography, "My Childhood" and "In the World," seems to many to constitute a real literary event. These two volumes, with their five hundred pages each, carry Gorky's story forward only to his fifteenth year! Curious pictures of life crowd the pages. The portraits have an amazing reality. Gorky's grandmother is a living and breathing person, the one bright spot in the pathetic childhood so vividly described. She is

drawn completely, even to her bulbous nose, but the picture is a loving one. "Until she came into my life," says Gorky, "I seemed to have been asleep, and hidden away in obscurity; but when she appeared she woke me and led me to the light of day. Connecting all my impressions by a single thread, she wove them into a pattern of many colors, thus making herself my friend for life, the being nearest my heart, the dearest and best known of all; while her disinterested love for all creation enriched me, and built up the strength needful for a hard life."

Leonid Andreev (1871–1919) has also recorded the grief and sorrow of Russia. He challenges God and man, and he dwells in the shadow. His enthusiasm for Nietzsche is significant. Like Tolstoy and like that other gifted Russian writer Garshin, Andreev has depicted vividly the misery and uselessness of war; his story "The Red Laugh" is a powerful indictment of it. Andreev is more of an artist than Gorky. Each of his stories and plays presents a problem. A number of his works have now been translated into English.

Three other men are considerable factors in recent Russian literature. Chirikov, while not a great writer, has an easy, sympathetic style. His stories and plays give accurate pictures of provincial life. Kuprin exhibits also a healthy and invigorating realism. His characters are varied and attractive, though the sadness of Russia permeates his stories. Artzybashev's sensational novel "Sanin" reveals the disillusionment so general after the failure of the revolution of 1905; it touches the depths.

When in 1919 Madame Catherine Breshkovsky visited America, many heard that great Russian woman—great in character and great in suffering. We were deeply impressed by her thoughtful and wistful query "What to do? what to do?" It is the very phrase which has been used repeatedly by the chief writers of her country, and it expresses the earnest longing of the Russian, who, amid untold difficulties, is still seeking the solution of his national problems.

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Suggested Topics

The characteristics of the Russian people.
A study of Pushkin and other Russian poets.
Gogol's "Dead Souls"—its vivid pictures of Russian life.
A study of Turgenev's "Spring Freshets."

Character sketch of Raskolnikov, in "Crime and Punishment."
The Russian revolutionary movement as handled in Russian novels.
Tolstoy, the man and his ideas.
A study of Anna Karenina and her tragic fortunes.
A few of Tolstoy's tales.
Russian short stories—their general characteristics.
Recent Russian writers.
The genius of Russian literature.

CHAPTER XI

SCANDINAVIAN LITERATURE

The blood of the Vikings has been an important—perhaps the most vital—element in the making of the English race. America owes much to the dependable Scandinavian folk who have come in such large numbers to cast in their lot with us. Ethnologists tell us that the people of the Scandinavian countries represent today the purest strain of that ancient race which settled in Europe so many centuries ago, and which has affected so profoundly the thought and civilization of the whole world. Let us remember also that Northmen produced great literature as much as a thousand years ago, and that their successors have made in our own day significant contributions to European letters. On all accounts, therefore, the people of these northern regions fittingly find a place in our chronicle.

Land and people. The population of the Scandinavian countries numbers only a little more than ten million people. Almost half of the territory and more than half of the population belong to Sweden. Norway and Denmark have about two and a half million people each, while the population of Iceland numbers eighty-five thousand. The racial Teutonic stock common to these countries has made its home there continuously from prehistoric times. The Scandinavians are related in race and language, as we have seen, to other Germanic peoples. Generally speaking, all the Northland spoke the same language until the tenth century of the Christian Era; then there came to be a marked divergence between the speech of Norway and Iceland on the one hand and of Sweden and Denmark on the other. From the fourteenth century forward, Sweden developed a speech somewhat different from that of Denmark, with an infusion of German, French, and classical words.

The people of Iceland speak and write essentially the same language as did their ancestors of the Viking age. Norwegian was influenced by Swedish and later by Danish. By the close of the fourteenth century, Danish had become the language of Norway. Dialectical changes have since produced in Norway a modified speech—Dano-Norwegian, or Danish with a considerable Norwegian element.

The adventurous Northmen, largely from Norway, displayed their greatest activity in the eighth and ninth centuries. They settled in the British Isles, on the coast of France, in the Lowlands, on the Rhine, and in Finland and Russia. Their journeys took them as far south as Italy. Runic inscriptions of the Northmen have been discovered in Greece, and some twenty-five thousand Arabian coins of the Viking age have been found in Sweden, a striking witness to the trade and piracy of the Vikings. The consolidation of Norway under Harold Fairhair drove the flower of the Norwegian chieftains to Iceland, where they settled during the period from 870 to 930 and took over the small Celtic element from Ireland which had preceded them. In Denmark the separate kingdoms were united under one government in the ninth century, and Christianity was introduced. Norway became Christian at the end of the tenth century, Iceland in 1000, and Sweden a century later. Iceland joined Norway in 1262, and its remarkable separate history came to a close. Shortly thereafter Norway, Denmark, and Iceland were united. By the Union of Calmar, in 1397, all Scandinavia came under one government. Sweden, however, in 1523 dissolved the union. It will be recalled that in the seventeenth century Sweden became for a period one of the chief European powers and produced a great leader in the person of Gustavus Adolphus. Norway separated from Denmark in 1814, and until 1905 was united to Sweden. Today Norway, Sweden, and Denmark have separate governments; Iceland and Denmark have the same king but are otherwise not united governmentally.

MOUNTAIN GATEWAY OF THE GEIRANGERFJORD WITH THE SLENDER STREAMS OF THE "SEVEN SISTERS" FALLS, NORWAY

The Early Period—Icelandic Literature

The Eddas and sagas of Iceland possess extraordinary interest. That so small and scattered a people, in such untoward circumstances of life and at so early a point in the culture of the North, could produce literature of this order seems amazing to us. This literature is the treasure house of the ancient myths, legends, and traditions of the Northern Teutonic tribes, and it records the chief history that has come down to us of the Northern people for the four hundred years subsequent to 860.

The people of Iceland established a form of government republican in its nature, with local assemblies, called Things, and a general assembly, the Althing; but there was no involved governmental machinery. Efficient, brave, straightforward in speech and action, these kingly men were workers, traders, fighters, at home in Iceland, at home in their strong, open boats on the sea, at home in any country in Europe. The slight element of Celtic blood gave them an intensity not inherent in their original stock. We find them passionate, impulsive, adventurous, faithful friends, deadly enemies —men who loved the flashing sword, the bounding sea, the realistic tale, the song of battle.

In the early period there was no recorded literature. Short inscriptions made with runes, the letters used by the old Teutonic tribes, were the first writing. With the coming of Christianity the Latin script was adopted, with the retention of a few of the runes for which there was no equivalent in Latin. Dating from the middle of the twelfth century a very considerable body of literature in prose and verse appeared, the outgrowth of the impulse to record the tales and poems which the scalds, or minstrels, had been reciting for many generations.

The Eddas. Two priceless collections have preserved to us a large body of the poetry of that early time. The "Younger Edda," so called (1222–1223), was compiled and in part composed by Snorri Sturluson, an Icelandic statesman, poet, saga-writer, and historian. In the first part the author, in the framework of a prose story, presents the mythology of his ancestors, utilizing the old

current pagan poems. The second part, by means of a conversation at a banquet, introduces some three hundred verse quotations to illustrate poetic art and expression; hence *Edda*, that is, "poetics." In the third part we have a historic poem in over one hundred verses, written by Snorri himself, together with a body of rules in prose. The "Younger Edda" is therefore in essence a textbook of poetry, with many illustrative examples.

The collection of mythological poems known as the "Elder Edda" was attributed originally, though on slight foundation, to Saemund the Wise (died 1133). Probably the vellums on which this collection is written do not date farther back than 1350. They were presented in 1643 by a bishop of Iceland to the Danish king of that time. The poems cover a long period, approximately from 850 to 1200; they originated in Norway (this portion was the larger element), in Iceland, and in Greenland. We may think of the scalds as singing before princes, warriors, and common people these somewhat obscure and symbolic mythological, didactic, and heroic songs. The "Elder Edda" in its present form contains thirty-eight poems, written in alliterative verse and in three different meters. A number of these poems deal with the heroic and mythical tale of Sigurd (Siegfried) in the most ancient form known to the Germanic tribes. These were made the basis of the "Volsunga Saga." Note this stanza of the poem relating to the death of Sigurd:

"Gudrun of old days
Drew near to dying,
As she sat in sorrow
Over Sigurd;
Yet she sighed not
Nor smote hand on hand,
Nor wailed she aught
As other women."

From the "Elder Edda" we gain the most complete view available of the Norse mythology—of the creation of the world, of the dwarfs and giants and Valkyries, of Asgard and Valhalla, of Odin, of Thor the thunderer and his hammer, of Balder the god of sun-

light and spring, of Freya the goddess of love, and of all the other elements in the myths of the Northern people, reaching back we know not how many generations before recorded history.

While the Eddas are in general inferior to the sagas, these old poems deeply influenced the saga writers, who drew upon the themes of the Eddas repeatedly and incorporated poems and war songs in their prose narratives.

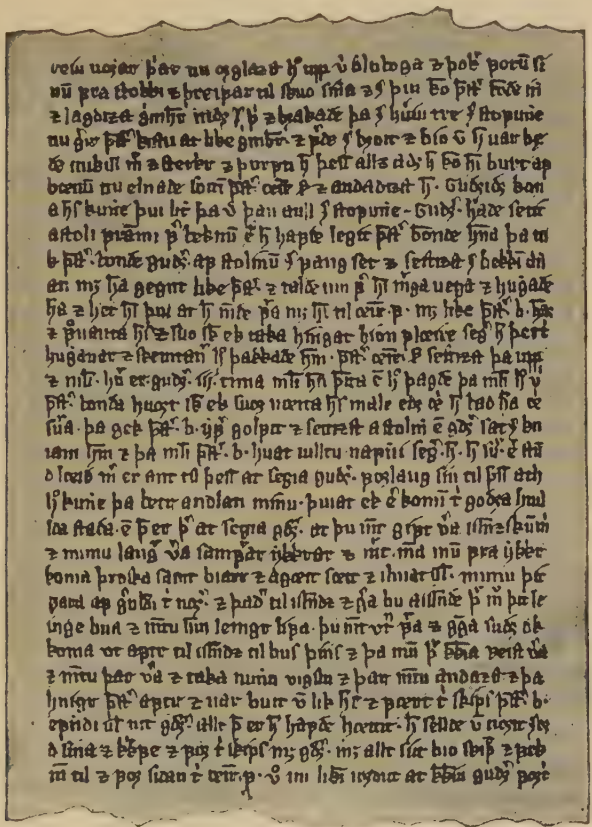
The sagas. Viewed in its simplest form the saga is *something that is said.* It is a prose tale giving the history of some noteworthy individual or family of Norway or Iceland during the heroic period (ending about 1030). In the more complete tales many persons are introduced, but in its essence the saga gives the life of its hero, set down in regular fashion, told simply as a man talks—the hero's family, his youth, his journeys, his return to his home, his general renown, his heroic passing, and the revenge that his kinsmen took for his death. The theme is not disturbed by digressions, there is no comment on the incidents, and the narrative is truthful and vivid with a reality that is all but unparalleled.

The oral period of the sagas had closed by 1125, and all the greater sagas had been written down by the middle of the succeeding century. Of the shorter sagas there are about twenty, including the tale of Erik the Red and the earliest discovery of America. The greater sagas of the Icelanders are the "Egil," the "Laxdæla," the "Eyrbyggja," and the "Njal." There are also sagas relating to Norway and other lands, of which the most important is Snorri Sturluson's "Heimskringla" ("The Circuit of the World"), a great historic document telling of the lives and exploits of King Olaf Trygvesson and Saint Olaf. To these should be added the mythical and romantic sagas, notably the "Volsunga Saga," intensely interesting and seeming to give expression to all the genius of the people of the North.

Let us glance at some of these famous tales. Here is an account of Egil in his prime:

"And when the king saw that Egil was come in, he bade the lower bench be cleared for them, and that Egil should sit in the high seat

facing the king. Egil sat down there, and cast his shield before his feet. He had his helm on his head, and laid his sword across his knees; and now and again he half drew it, and then clashed it back into the sheath.



ICELANDIC MANUSCRIPT

From the Flatey Book

He sat upright, but with head bent forward. Egil was large-featured, broad of forehead, with large eye-brows, a nose not long but very thick, lips wide and long, chin exceeding broad, as was all about the jaws; thick-necked was he, and big-shouldered beyond other men, hard-

featured, and grim when angry. He would not drink now, though the horn was borne to him, but alternately twitched his brows up and down."[1]

This same Egil was a real poet, as we can see from his dirge on his son's death, one of the most powerful of Norse poems. There are twenty-four stanzas, filled with tragic sadness and utter woe. The following verses suggest the theme:

"Dwindling now my kindred
Draw near to their end,
Ev'n as forest-saplings
Felled or tempest-strown."

Note the following picture of Olaf Trygvesson:

"King Olaf could run across the oars outside of his vessel while his men were rowing the *Serpent*. He could play with three daggers, so that one was always in the air, and he took the one falling by the handle. He could walk all round upon the ship's rails, could strike and cut equally well with both hands, and could cast two spears at once. King Olaf was a very merry, frolicsome man; gay and social; had great taste in everything; was very generous; was very finical in his dress, but in battle he exceeded all in bravery."[2]

Heroic is the last view of him, when, beset by his enemies in that last and greatest sea fight, he springs overboard, throws his shield over his head, and sinks beneath the waters.

The translation by Dasent of that great classic the "Njalssaga" ("The Story of Burnt Njal") is itself a classic. Here we encounter Gunnar—handsome, fair-skinned, blue-eyed, ruddy-cheeked, of sturdy frame and strong will, a man slow to wrath, bountiful and gentle, a fast friend.

"He could cut or thrust or shoot, if he chose, as well with his left as with his right hand, and he smote so swiftly with his sword that three seemed to flash through the air at once. He was the best shot with the bow of all men, and never missed the mark. He could leap more than his own height, with all his war-gear, and as far backwards as forwards."

[1] Translation by W. C. Green. [2] Translation by Samuel Laing.

It was this same Gunnar who thus gave expression to his love for his homestead:

"'Fair is the Lithe; so fair that it has never seemed to me so fair; the corn fields are white to harvest, and the home mead is mown; and now I will ride back home and not fare abroad at all.'"

But what of the chief woman character in this "Njalssaga"? Most of the cruel fortunes of the heroes of the tale are due to the heartless, calculating woman Hallgerda. She makes an indelible impression upon the reader. At the very outset of this strange, eventful history we see her in her early girlhood seated on the floor with other girls, "fair of face and tall of growth, and her hair as soft as silk." Her father says to his brother Hrut:

"'What dost thou think of this maiden? Is she not fair?' Hrut held his peace. Hauskuld said the same thing to him a second time, and then Hrut answered, 'Fair enough is this maid, and many will smart for it; but this I know not, whence thief's eyes have come into our race.'"

After a period we see Hallgerda grown up, "the fairest of women to look upon; she was tall of stature, too, and therefore she was called 'Longcoat.' She was fair-haired, and had so much hair that she could hide herself in it; but she was lavish and hard-hearted." A significant speech defines her character: "To no one," Hallgerda said, "will I give place, for I will not be driven into the corner for anyone." See her again, with one husband killed by her connivance, and almost ready to be married to a second:

"She had on a cloak of rich blue woof, and under it a scarlet kirtle, and a silver girdle round her waist; but her hair came down on both sides of her bosom, and she had turned the locks up under her girdle. She sat down between Hrut and her father, and she greeted them all with kind words, and spoke well and boldly, and asked what was the news."

It does not surprise us that when Gunnar, her husband, infinitely her superior in every way, is hard beset and seeks her aid, she refuses to lift a finger, but answers in a cold, contemptuous way and

calmly sees him die. Very different is that loyal wife of Njal in the same saga. She is offered her freedom, but she elects to be burned to death with her husband. "I was given away to Njal young," said Bergthora, "and I have promised him this, that we should both share the same fate."

We meet these ancient elemental people just as they are—wise, foolish, lazy, industrious, commonplace, noble, generous-hearted, cruel. Their intrepidity in the face of certain death is a constant miracle. Resistless fate grips them, and they are gone. A few words of passion or of devotion, a few strokes of the sword, and their story is told. The women are frequently as heroic as the men. And the men—what lust for life, what glorious energy!

"Then are they glad,
The skillful men-at-arms,
Agile to jump
And swing the oars,
Till they break the loops
And snap the thole-pins;
Splash goes the water
At the word of the King."

One feels rewarded by an acquaintance with any of the sagas. But the deepest impression is perhaps produced by reading the "Volsunga Saga." Magnusson and Morris's translation seems to have all the force of the original. William Morris deals with the same theme in his heroic epic "Sigurd the Volsung." The tale belongs to the ancient past of the Teutonic peoples. We have already encountered the German version in the "Nibelungenlied," but the Norse version transcends it. Brynhild and Sigurd are both represented as descendants of the gods. The story of the hoard and of the magic ring is made more vivid and real. The web of fate is more skillfully woven. Sigurd himself is a truly heroic figure, without a blemish, intended to embody all the virtues of the Northern peoples.

There are forty-three episodes in the "Volsunga Saga," twelve of which relate incidents previous to the birth of Sigurd. Volsung, his grandfather and the founder of the family, is the grandson of the god

Odin. At several striking places in the tale, Odin himself appears. Our first glimpse reveals him huge, one-eyed, old in appearance, barefoot, wearing a spotted cloak and holding a sword in his hand. Sigmund, Sigurd's father, after a most adventurous life, dies before the birth of his famous son. Sigurd is initiated into all the arts by his foster father Regin, at whose instigation Sigurd slays the dragon Fafnir and secures the hoard and the magic ring. On his faithful horse Grani, and bearing his famous sword Gram, he passes the wall of flame and enters the castle beyond, where he frees Brynhild from enchantment. Their mutual vows come to naught, for through a magic potion he forgets Brynhild and marries the Burgundian Gudrun. Gunnar, Gudrun's brother, seeks Brynhild in marriage. Sigurd accomplishes for Gunnar what the latter could not do. In the likeness of Gunnar he "mounts and rides, Gram in his hand, and golden spurs on his heels; then leapt Grani into the fire when he felt the spurs; and a mighty roar arose as the fire burned ever madder, and the earth trembled, and the flames went up even unto the heavens." Brynhild, as the result of the supposed Gunnar's exploit, marries the real Gunnar and in due time claims precedence over her rival Gudrun. Learning from Gudrun how she has been tricked, Brynhild vows vengeance on Sigurd, who is speedily done to death. "And now none might know for what cause Brynhild must bewail with weeping what she had prayed for with laughter." Death comes as a welcome relief from the life that now can mean nothing more to her; and Sigurd and she are burned on the same funeral pyre. The subsequent fortunes of Gudrun and the other heroic characters in this tale of great deeds cannot be described here.

All the bitterness and enmity, all the stirring passions of the early day, stand revealed in this old folk tale. Read it and you will discover the things that moved most deeply the forefathers of our race as they faced the facts of life.

The Middle Period

There are not many important names in the history of Scandinavian literature from the close of the saga period until the beginning of the nineteenth century. But a brief review will be useful.

Denmark and Norway. These countries may be treated as one, since politically they were united until the nineteenth century and

their language was practically identical. Runic inscriptions, part of which are rhythmic in form, have been collected in Norway, dating from very early times. In the thirteenth century the "Thidreks Saga" appeared in Norway; it is worthy of a place beside the contemporary Icelandic sagas. It deals with the fortunes of Dietrich of Bern, who exercised a fascination over the minds of the Teutonic tribes, as we have already discovered. Denmark, however, was the real center of such literary activity as existed in these two countries during the middle period. The early writings were in Latin. By far the most conspicuous of these was "Historia Danica," by Saxo Grammaticus, a thirteenth-century historian. It carries the history of Denmark forward to the year 1186. Note the enthusiasm which Erasmus felt for Saxo's work: "He has written the history of his country in a style both splendid and sublime. I praise his vivid, ardent spirit, his diction, which never betrays flagging or exhaustion, no less than the wondrous richness of his style, his wealth of sound principles and remarkable variety of imagery."

Of special interest are the collections of Danish ballads, about five hundred in all. Some come from a period as early as the eleventh century, but they date chiefly from 1300 to 1500. The first collection was Vedel's "Kæmpeviser" (1591). Old Norse mythology and traditions in these popular ballads suggest a connection with the Eddas, which is borne out also by their bold conceptions, their short sentences, and their singular directness and force. Christian times are reflected in the themes of others of these ballads, and the characteristic life of the Middle Ages in ballads of chivalry and love. A number of interesting examples are given in Longfellow's "Poets and Poetry of Europe."

In the Reformation Period Christian Pedersen (1480–1554) did much through his literary pursuits to influence the thought of Denmark and to fix the language. Hans Tausen and Paul Helgesen, his successors, wrote mainly in the field of religious controversy. The earliest Danish plays date from this period. They were mostly morality plays and emanated from school and university.

The eighteenth century marks the period when Denmark and Norway first produced a writer who proved an abiding influence upon

the literature of these countries and of Europe. **Ludvig Holberg** (1684–1754) was born in Bergen, Norway, received his education in Copenhagen, and spent most of his time for a number of years during his early manhood in travel and study in foreign lands. The European culture thus gained and passed on to his countrymen proved of great benefit. In 1718 he received an appointment to the University of Copenhagen and held in turn positions as professor of metaphysics, of Latin and rhetoric, and of history and geography. In his earliest writing, "Peder Paars," a comical heroic poem of more than six thousand lines, Holberg displayed his talent as satirist and comic writer. Holberg has told us that his object was to ridicule the ballads which the common people were reading with such avidity, and also to make fun of heroic verse. The poem brought him immediate fame. On the formation of a theatrical company in Copenhagen, Holberg was asked to furnish plays. During the succeeding five years he produced twenty-eight comedies, five of the best of which appeared the first year, 1722. After a period of some years, during which the theater had declined, he wrote (1747) six additional plays. But his other writings were also very numerous—history, philosophy, criticism, and allegory. In his essays, over five hundred in number, he has been compared to Montaigne. His "Niels Klim's Underground Journey," a satirical romance, became his most widely known book and was speedily translated into all European languages. He wrote a human, frank, and witty autobiography in Latin, later translated into Danish.

Holberg's comedies are practically all in prose. They deal with allegorical subjects, with popular superstitions, and with follies and weaknesses in human nature. The best of them are domestic comedies, depicted with such realism that, as the Danish poet Oehlenschläger has remarked, "If Copenhagen had been buried beneath the ground and only Holberg's comedies had remained, we should nevertheless have known the life that stirred within its walls, not only in its broadest outlines, but in many of its minutest details." Holberg has been termed with some justice the Danish Molière, though the comparison may easily be pressed too far. Three capital plays of Holberg are included in the volume in English pub-

lished by the American-Scandinavian Foundation. "Jeppe of the Hill" describes to the life a drunken peasant who takes for a day the rôle of a nobleman. "The Political Tinker" satirizes, as Holberg himself says, "those boasters among common people in free cities who sit in taverns and criticize the mayor and council; they know everything and yet nothing." "Erasmus Montanus" presents a picture of a country youth who returns from the university puffed up with pedantry but without any deep convictions, bringing about a situation of pure comedy.

In his closing days Holberg said, "I have sought all my life long to be a useful citizen of my country"; and he was stating the simple truth. His influence has been a stimulating one. There is no name in Danish literature greater than his.

Of the writers of Denmark during the last half of the eighteenth century, the so-called Age of Enlightenment, Johannes Evald (1743–1781) stands preëminent. He took Klopstock as his literary master. In 1770 appeared his first work of consequence—a prose tragedy "Rolf Krage," the earliest genuine literary production to utilize a theme from the legendary Scandinavian history. Evald is, however, remembered chiefly for two three-act poetic dramas, "Balder's Death" (1744) and "The Fishermen" (1778). The latter contains the Danish national song, "King Christian Stood by the Lofty Mast," which is well known to readers of English in Longfellow's spirited translation.

Sweden. The earliest writings in Swedish that have come down to us are legal documents, or collections of laws, dating from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, possibly earlier. Ballads and folk songs, similar to those of the Danes, belong to the same centuries and later, though they were not collected until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Good examples appear in Longfellow's "Poets and Poetry of Europe." Romances of chivalry and rimed chronicles were produced in Sweden during the Middle Ages, as in other countries of Europe. Most of the national literature for five hundred years after the introduction of Christianity was of a religious character. Neither the Renaissance nor the Reformation exercised any marked influence over the literature of the country.

The earliest prose history was written by Gustavus Vasa (1530). Drama had scarcely made a beginning by the middle of the seventeenth century.

In the reign of Gustavus Adolphus appeared Georg Stjernhjelm (1598–1672), the first Swedish poet of distinction. His epic "Hercules" was celebrated in his day. He produced also comic operas and sonnets and was accomplished in other fields. For over a century, until the time of Olof von Dalin (1708–1763), there was no name equally famous, although the intervening years had witnessed great intellectual activity, and a number of writers had appeared who exhibited the influence of French and English literary models. Dalin was a journalist, critic, and poet. His heroic poem "Freedom of Sweden," his tragedy "Brynhilda," and his four-volume "History of the Swedish Kingdom" are his chief writings. The name of Dalin dominated this entire period.

It is interesting to recall that in this same century Sweden produced two men of genius in the fields of science and philosophy—Linnæus (1707–1778), the celebrated botanist, and Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), philosopher, theological writer, and mystic, founder of the so-called New Church.

At the close of the eighteenth century Sweden began to develop rapidly. Gustavus III proved to be a genuine patron of letters; he founded the Swedish Academy and the Swedish theater, and he was no mean playwright himself. Of the many writers of the time three won a prominent place: Johan Henrik Kellgren, critic, poet, and writer of lyric dramas; Karl Gustaf af Leopold, satirist and Classical writer; and Karl M. Bellman, a national poet and a hymn-writer of distinction, deeply loved, it is said, by the common people of Sweden.

Modern Danish Literature

The leading writer of Denmark of the early nineteenth century was **Adam Gottlob Oehlenschläger** (1779–1850). Holberg had written under Classical influences; Oehlenschläger represented the Romantic movement in its finest expression in Denmark. Intellectual pursuits engaged his attention early, and in journalism and

other fields he gave considerable promise. In 1802, impressed deeply by the Norwegian critic Steffens, and fired by the patriotic ideals of his day, Oehlenschläger burst into song. His first volume of poems, published the next year, showed astonishing power and in itself entitled him to his place as the chief poet of his country. The lyrics and ballads which it contained constituted a challenge to his generation, the manifesto of a new literary movement. Two more volumes of poems appeared in 1805, the themes being taken in part from the ancient Norse tales. In this collection the chief place must be given to "Aladdin," a lyric dramatization of the Arabian Nights tale. The dedication of this poem was addressed to Goethe. Six more poetical works were the fruit of the five years which Oehlenschläger now spent in foreign travel. The best of his plays, a five-act tragedy "Hakon Jarl," based upon saga material, and the beautiful love play "Axel og Valborg," which utilizes a story of the Middle Ages, belong to this period. Of the great number of other poetical works produced by Oehlenschläger during the latter part of his life—tragedies, comedies, epic poems, etc.—it is not possible to speak here. His was an active life, somewhat disturbed by a bitter critical controversy with Baggesen and other literary men of his day. English translations of a number of his melodious and sentimental poems have been made, including Sir Theodore Martin's translation of "Aladdin," unquestionably one of the finest of the poet's writings.

Among Oehlenschläger's contemporaries the following were conspicuous: Baggesen, poet of the transition period; Grundtvig, poet, religious writer and leader, historian, and interpreter of Northern mythology; Ingemann, poet and novelist, thoroughly Romantic in his impulse; Heiberg, writer of over twenty volumes of prose and poetry, including dramas and musical plays; Hertz, lyric poet and author of important comedies in verse; and Paludan-Müller, a rarely gifted poet who drew upon ancient and modern literature, sacred history, and fairy tales for his themes. It will be noted that the age was exceedingly rich on the side of poetry. By the middle of the century the amount of poetical composition had noticeably decreased.

Two Danish writers very widely known in Europe and America call for more extended notice. **Hans Christian Andersen** (1805–1875), though a prolific writer of poems, romances, and dramas, is remembered almost exclusively in our day for his fairy tales. These, unlike the Grimm tales, which were mere collections of folk stories, were poetical compositions written by Andersen himself and illuminated by the light of genius. The Andersen stories are known throughout the world. They give delight to all; upon the thoughtful, mature reader the artistic skill and rare understanding of children displayed in the tales of this sensitive Dane make a deep impression. Boyesen's essay on Andersen gives many interesting personal facts.[1]

Georg Brandes (1842–1927) belongs in the main stream of European literature because of his powers as a critic. He is of Jewish race, a thoroughgoing linguist and cosmopolitan. His first essay appeared in 1862; hence his work covers a long and interesting period. Dr. Brandes's most famous criticism is to be found in his "Main Literary Currents of the Nineteenth Century" (six volumes), but many other works are the product of his pen. He finds himself in sympathy with the more radical thought of our era. A good impression of his fine, penetrative criticism may be gained from his volume of critical studies on Ibsen and Björnson.

Another radical Danish thinker of the late period is Holger H. H. Drachmann (1846–1908), artist and writer of realistic prose and verse, noted particularly for his lyric sea poems. A contemporary writer of Denmark has had considerable vogue in European and American circles—Martin Andersen Nexö, whose labor novel "Pelle the Conqueror," human, imaginative, realistic, and unreticent, belongs to the same school of international fiction as Romain Rolland's "Jean-Christophe."

Modern Norwegian Literature

An interesting literary movement resulted from the separation of Norway from Denmark in 1814. At first no very conspicuous writers appeared. Henrik Wergeland (1808–1845) and Sebastian

[1] Essays on Scandinavian Literature.

C. Welhaven (1807–1873) were, however, important factors in the development of a distinctively Norwegian national literature. Wergeland had a strong and erratic personality, a touch of idealism, intense patriotic ardor. His writings include plays and farces and epic and lyric poems of beauty and imagination. His controversy with Welhaven occupied the attention of all Norway. Wergeland took a strictly national position, while Welhaven held that the intellectual development of Norway must relate itself to that of Denmark and the rest of Europe. Welhaven's critical ideas were more sound, and they prevailed. His writings include literary studies, romances, and highly poetic and finished lyrics.

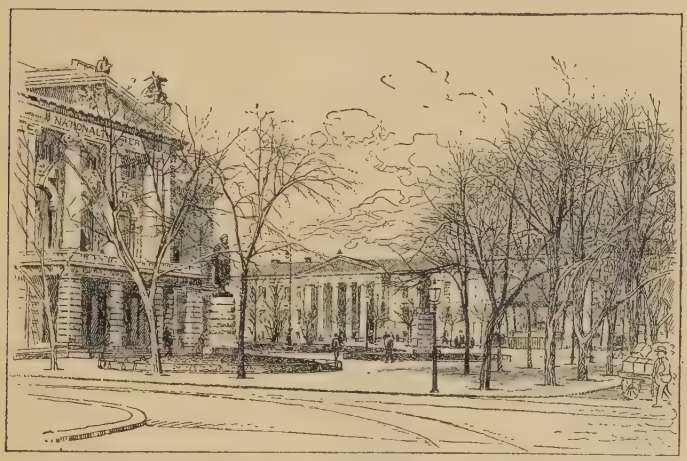
Two other Norwegians of the same period, Asbjörnsen and Moe, are of interest for the collections which they made of poetry of the people and folk stories. Both were men of discernment and displayed not only industry but good taste in the assembling of the popular and peasant literature of Norway.

Björnson and Ibsen, the outstanding Norwegian authors of our times, have taken a sure place in European letters. The contrast between the two is very great. Courage, hope, humanity, characterize Björnson; while Ibsen is solitary, holds himself aloof, displays an intensely critical and pessimistic spirit verging on despair, and never tempers judgment with mercy. Björnson faces toward the light, Ibsen dwells in the gloom. Björnson is an intense nationalist, while Ibsen inhabits the world. Björnson has love that is kind; Ibsen, genius that is cold.

Björnstjerne Björnson (1832–1910) was born in the bleak north of Norway, but when he was six the family moved to the Romsdal, one of the most beautiful portions of the country, the scenery of which touched his impressionable nature. Before his university course in Christiania was concluded, he had already written much. Tireless energy and exhaustless vitality were his lifelong characteristics. Journalist, theater director in both Bergen and Christiania, lecturer and public speaker in the fields of politics, social reform, religion, and literature, a writer of poems, plays, and novels, he proved a great dynamic force and a leading national figure always to be reckoned with. His travels took him to various

parts of Europe, and during the winter of 1880–1881 he lectured in the United States.

The novels of Björnson have a surprising range. There are thirteen volumes in the standard English edition. When Björnson was only twenty-four years of age appeared "Synnöve Solbakken," the first of his peasant stories. In the common opinion it is still his



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masterpiece. Like "Arne," "A Happy Boy," and "The Fisher Maiden," which belong to that early period, it carries with it all the freshness and beauty of the atmosphere of Norway. The directness, simplicity, and romantic quality of these tales are captivating in the extreme. Björnson's love for the Norse sagas is reflected throughout: the short, abrupt sentences, the intensity, and the pithy dialogue of the sagas are reproduced with wonderful skill. Indeed, Björnson developed early a finished prose style which he never lost. The novels of his later period, subsequent to 1874, reveal a great change in their author's point of view. Björnson had passed through a powerful inner struggle. While his essential nature was absolutely unchanged, the orthodoxy of his youth was gone, and a sort of agnostic theism had taken its place. Darwin, Mill, and

Spencer influenced him deeply. Following the literary evolution of his day, his Romanticism gave way to a searching Realism. His later novels, therefore, are of the problem variety: they set forth his social ideas, his views on education, his later attitude toward religion and faith. "In God's Way," the best of these rather disappointing novels, stands for liberal thought and for right conduct in life.

BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON

Björnson's plays show the same changes in their author's intellectual thought and interests as do his novels. Heroic tales from the sagas, particularly the "Heimskringla," furnish themes for the finest of the earlier plays. Björnson's historical drama, "Mary Stuart in Scotland," was less successful. "The Newly Married Couple" (1866), a quaint, optimistic comedy, can hardly be classified with the plays that preceded or followed it. "The Editor" and "A Bankruptcy," written mostly in Italy in 1874 and 1875, ushered in the series of social plays, belonging to Björnson's second period. It is true that the great problem plays of Ibsen produced in the same years have more breadth and weight and brilliancy, and that by comparison the plays of Björnson are inferior. Yet it is well worth while to quote Brandes's words on the Björnson of the second period. "A burning love of truth has set its mark on him. What individuality there is in these books; what powerful appeal for truthfulness towards ourselves and towards others; what a wealth of new ideas on all subjects—state and society, marriage and home life!"

The poems of Björnson are not numerous, though they are highly significant. In 1870 he published "Poems and Songs." Additions were made later, but very few poems appeared after 1874. One of Björnson's plays, "Halte-Hulda," is written in verse throughout. In other dramas and in his stories he has included lyric poems of great beauty. In some of his most striking verses Björnson, like a true scald, sings of the heroes of his race—notably in the ode "Bergliot" and in the epic romance in fifteen cantos, "Arnljot Gelline." In general his poems are objective, concise, perfectly natural. Few of them are personal poems or love poems, and comparatively few are religious poems. An intense love of nature and a pride in his own land are shown in Björnson's historical ballads and in the poems on patriotic subjects, which seem to be the most characteristic of the entire collection. One of his lyrics, "Ja, vi elsker dette landet" ("Yes! we love this our country!"), in Nordraak's musical version is the national hymn of Norway. "Poems and Songs" and "Arnljot Gelline" in English translation form attractive volumes in the Scandinavian Classics series issued by the American-Scandinavian Foundation.

Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906), the greatest of Scandinavian writers, was born in Skien, a town of about three thousand inhabitants in the south of Norway. The family was Norwegian, with a mixture of Danish and Scotch and more of German blood. Henrik proved a rather unpromising boy, unsociable, oppressed by the poverty of his family and by the lack of advantages in the remote and uncultivated part of Norway where his lot was cast. At Grimstad, a town of perhaps five hundred persons, where he made his home from his sixteenth to his twenty-first year, employed in an apothecary's shop, he was desperately poor and unhappy and was looked upon as rude and queer. At the close of this period, fired by the Revolution of 1848 and interested in Cicero and Sallust in connection with his reading for the university, he produced a three-act youthful tragedy, "Catiline," written in blank verse and in rime. He now went to Christiania to pursue his studies and to try his fortune, and there led a precarious existence, supported partly by his pen and partly through outside assistance. A few friends recognized

his budding genius. In 1851 Ibsen, then a youth of twenty-three, accepted Ole Bull's offer to assist the newly organized National Theater in Bergen as "dramatic author." This connection brought him experience and some foreign travel, but little in the way of funds. He worked on a historical drama in prose and verse—"The Feast at Solhaug"—and on the saga plays "Lady Inger" and "The Vikings at Helgeland." In 1857, shortly after his marriage, he returned to Christiania to take the post of director of the Norwegian Theater. There he lived until 1864, with the exception of the short period when he went to Hardanger and elsewhere, under a traveling-grant, to collect folk songs and legends. The first fruit of those wretched years of struggle and slight recognition was a satirical verse play, "Love's Comedy." It provoked a storm of abuse. He said later: "The only person who at that time approved of the book was my wife. . . . My countrymen excommunicated me. All were against me." The historical drama which followed, "The Pretenders," showed an enormous advance over his earlier work, yet at the time few recognized its power. As to Ibsen himself, at the close of this early period of his career we find him already the castigator, the cynic, the revolutionist. He looked upon Norway as "a barbarous country, inhabited by millions of cats and dogs." When Brandes said to him, "You know, there are sound potatoes and rotten potatoes in the world," Ibsen responded, "I am afraid none of the sound ones have come under my notice."

It is not surprising that Ibsen, smarting under the disapproval of his countrymen and seeking a freer atmosphere, voluntarily expatriated himself and made his way to Italy. This was in 1864, when he was thirty-seven. He was destined to remain abroad, except for two brief visits to Norway, until 1891. During this long period he lived in various parts of Italy, in Dresden, in Munich, and elsewhere. His circumstances were much straitened at first, but they bettered by slow degrees. He gradually drew within himself, lived a solitary and self-centered life, and became a close observer of men, but not one who willingly shared in the perplexities and turmoils of his kind.

The product of the first year of his exile was the poetic drama "Brand," which gave him at once a position among the leading writers of Europe. Brand is an idealist, a man of terrific energy and depth of conviction, whose motto is "all or nothing." As it happens, he is a priest, but, as Ibsen assures us, he might have had any other calling.

HENRIK IBSEN

At every step in his career Brand displays an exaggerated sense of duty. It is nothing for him to battle with snow and cold. He risks his life with no hesitation on the waters of the fjord in a fierce storm in order that he may save a man's soul. The womanly, gentle Agnes, who is impressed with Brand's idealism and has become his wife, submits to his unswerving mandates. Their frail child, who cannot exist in the bleak spot where duty has called them, perishes. Brand compels Agnes as an act of charity to part with the last remnant of the child's clothing. She herself is crushed in spirit and dies; but Brand's life pursuit continues. He has become a prodigy, even a saint, and people throng to the new church which he has dedicated. Not content, he seeks the heights with a few of his congregation. They desert him, and the stern, implacable idealist loses his life in an avalanche.

The strength of the play, in its poetry, in its symbolical pictures of nature, in its stern religious fervor, must be apparent to everyone; to the Norwegian it has from the first been the most popular and impressive of Ibsen's works.

"Peer Gynt," which followed in 1867, is, to quote Ibsen's own words, "a long dramatic poem, having as its chief figure one of the

half-mythical and fantastic personages from the peasant life of modern Norway." He insisted that it presented no problem and was to be read simply as a poem.

Peer presents a most curious contrast to Brand. He is an easy-going, pleasure-seeking youth, imaginative, nursing his selfish illusions, Emperor of Himself. We follow him through his rollicking experience of running away with the bride of another youth; and through his unsavory life in the mountains, where he chooses the "roundabout" way, wrestles with the spirit of compromise, and solves in a very cheap and sorry manner the riddle of his existence. We see him again at his home, where, in an inimitable scene, he comforts his mother's soul as it faces the Great Beyond. Then we find him, a middle-aged man, in the midst of his checkered foreign adventures, in which he sometimes dupes others and sometimes is himself the dupe. Finally, as an old man, after escaping from shipwreck at the expense of another man's life, Peer is in his old-time surroundings, brooding over his own past, and abjectly fearing Death, who appears in the guise of a button-molder. Our last view of him is at the mountain hut of his old sweetheart Solveig, who has waited for him these many years.

We feel under so great a debt when we read and reread this poetic masterpiece, or listen to the Grieg music which it has inspired, that we are ready to forgive Ibsen for all his personal crankiness and spleen.

After "Peer Gynt" no work of Ibsen's was written in verse. The somewhat provincial "League of Youth" appeared in 1867, and four years later the long historical play, in two parts, "Emperor and Galilean," to which Ibsen devoted incredible pains for a number of years. A series of social dramas, or problem plays, was ushered in by "Pillars of Society" (1877) and by the more finished and intense play "A Doll's House." This type of drama, now so familiar to us, was—it must not be forgotten—brought to artistic perfection by Ibsen. The entrances and exits are handled with extraordinary care and nicety; the reality of the dialogue is all but miraculous; the plot is developed pitilessly to a logical conclusion; the problem, whether it has to do with questions of heredity, or family life, or public duty, or moral weakness, commonly strikes

the reader with overwhelming force. These plays are perennially provocative of discussion; their vividness is such that one almost inevitably takes sides, now with the author, now against him. To read Ibsen, therefore, is a stimulating experience. It means the reconstruction of some of our ideas. It enables us to analyze motives more clearly and to search the conscience and the understanding. Not only the plays themselves, but their inner history, the circumstances that led to their evolution, the reception accorded them in Norway and elsewhere, Ibsen's correspondence with Björnson, Brandes, and others,—all these matters are of great interest and are necessarily a part of the story. The introductions to the volumes of the standard English edition, and the extensive Ibsen critical literature, are always informing.

The international fame of Ibsen dates from the publication of "A Doll's House," in 1879. Then followed "Ghosts," a brutally frank study in heredity; "The Enemy of the People," based on Ibsen's conviction that "the minority is always right"; and the enigmatic play "The Wild Duck," in which Ibsen seems to be laughing at himself. "Rosmersholm" (1886), while a realistic play, has a considerable imaginative element. Ibsen explains, "This play deals with the struggle which all serious-minded human beings have to wage with themselves in order to bring their lives into harmony with their convictions." Impelling as this strong, tragic play is, the comedy which followed in 1888, "The Lady from the Sea," is even finer in its construction and insight. The impression of the sea is profound, and the mysterious element at the basis of the story is exceedingly attractive. Ibsen created a strong individual type in his next play, "Hedda Gabler" (1890). "It has not been my desire," he said, "to deal in this play with so-called problems. What I principally wanted to do was to depict human beings, human emotions, and human destinies upon a groundwork of certain of the social conditions and principles of the present day." "The Master Builder" (1892), produced after his return to Norway, has a strain of autobiography and a beautiful, poetic quality. It is less realistic than symbolic; few of Ibsen's plays are superior to it. His latest productions, "Little Eyolf" (1894), "John Gabriel

Borkman" (1896), and "When We Dead Awaken" (which appeared in 1899, when Ibsen was nearly seventy-two years old), have their admirers. Though these plays show no loss of skill, they seem on the whole decidedly below his best. Ibsen's work was done. After a long illness he died in his seventy-ninth year (1906) at his home in Christiania.

During the recent period the writers of Norway have been very numerous, as in the case of other European countries. Jonas Lie[1] (1833–1908), one of the most popular of Norwegian novelists, devoted most of his life to journalism and literature. In his Christiania days he was the intimate of Björnson and Ibsen. His best-known novel, "The Pilot and his Wife," is a good example of his tales of the sea; in this field he excelled. The novels written by Lie after 1883 were naturalistic and somewhat less pleasing. Lie's writings fill, in all, fifteen volumes. His best stories have been translated into English and other languages. Alexander Kielland, Camilla Collett (the sister of Wergeland), Arne Garborg, Hans Aanrud, and others have earned some distinction as novelists. Johan Bojer's "Face of the World" and "The Great Hunger," two strong and somber stories, have been read widely in English. The same is true of Knut Hamsun's "Hunger" and "Growth of the Soil." The former is a story, told in the first person, of privation and struggle in Christiania. "Growth of the Soil" is a greater book. It gives a powerful impression of life in the wilds close to nature. Hamsun was born in 1860 and has had an interesting career. He won in 1920 the Nobel prize for literature.

Modern Swedish Literature

Sweden, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, was deeply influenced by the Romantic movement, which first found expression in the poetry of the so-called "Phosphorists," who followed German models, and in that of the Gothic school of poets, enthusiasts for the mythology and antiquity of the North. Atterbom, the chief poet of the Phosphorists, produced many lyric poems, wrote

[1] Pronounced Lee.

criticisms and works on æsthetics, and dramatized fairy tales. Geijer, the founder of the Gothic school, wrote stirring poems on old Norse themes and was also a prominent essayist and historian.

Among the many talented poets of this period **Esaias Tegnér** (1782–1846) is the great outstanding figure. He possessed perhaps the most interesting personality of all the men of letters of his country. He came of peasant stock, his home being in the province of Wermland. The death of his father when the boy was only nine years old left the family in straitened circumstances, but Esaias fortunately found a friend in the assessor of the district and was assisted by him in his schooling and in his course in the University of Lund. High honors came to him early. Before long he was established in university work and in 1811 became professor of Greek. He also held ecclesiastical positions, first as pastor and in 1824 as bishop. From Boyesen's brilliant essay on Tegnér[1] we get a powerful impression of the poet's abounding optimism, vitality, and magnetism, his intellectual strength, his broad and unconventional religious views, and particularly his courage in fighting the melancholy and madness that clouded his later years.

Tegnér's first distinctive poem was a war song written in 1808, followed three years later by "Svea," a splendid but somewhat rhetorical patriotic poem which earned him the prize of the Swedish Academy. The lyrics and longer poems of the succeeding years are strongly emotional and romantic. He is the poet of youth and imagination, and he thus reminds us of Schiller, whom he honored and whose enthusiasm for the classics he shared.

Longfellow, as one result of his trip to Sweden in 1835, became greatly interested in Tegnér. He translated in the hexameters of the original the idyllic "Children of the Lord's Supper," which Tegnér had written in 1820. It is the finest of Tegnér's poems. Note the opening stanza:

> "Pentecost, day of rejoicing, had come. The church of the village
> Gleaming stood, in the morning's sheen. On the spire of the belfry,
> Decked with a brazen cock, the friendly flames of the spring sun
> Glanced like the tongues of fire beheld by Apostles aforetime."

[1] See "Essays on Scandinavian Literature."

Longfellow, in connection with his essay on Tegnér's "Frithiof's Saga," gave a brilliant picture of Swedish life.[1] He translated also a part of "Frithiof's Saga." It was the only one of the many translations of this remarkable heroic poem that fully satisfied Tegnér himself. The poem was the fruit of the poet's deep interest in the ancient tales of his race. There are twenty-four divisions, or episodes, each written in a different meter. A careful analysis of the poem is given by Boyesen. It is the tale of the adventures of the mighty hero Frithiof and of his wooing of Ingeborg. The interest of the story is heightened by the strongly marked autobiographical element—the emotional experiences of the poet himself.

Johan Ludvig Runeberg (1804–1877), a Swedish poet of the first rank, and perhaps of more secure reputation than even Tegnér, whom he succeeded, was a Swedish Finlander born in Jacobstad, Finland.[2] As a boy he was supported by his uncle. He received his education at the college at Wasa and at the University of Åbo. In 1830 he became *docent* in Latin literature at the university, which had just been transferred to Helsingfors. He published in the same year his first collection of lyrics. In 1831 his patriotic epic poem "The Grave in Perrho" won the Swedish Academy prize. A number of lyric poems and idylls followed; the best of the latter is "The Elk-Hunters," a descriptive poem written in hexameters. But his masterpiece was a series of poems published in two parts

[1] This is reprinted in the "Poems of Tegnér," published in the Scandinavian Classics series.

[2] Note on Finnish Literature. Finland, which, as one of the results of the World War, has now secured national independence, is a country of 3,400,000 inhabitants situated between Sweden and Russia. It formed a part of Sweden from the latter part of the thirteenth century until 1809, when it was forcibly annexed to Russia. About 12 per cent of the inhabitants are Swedish, and Swedish culture has dominated Finland during recent centuries. However, a very large part of the inhabitants are Finns, related to the Magyars. In the interior the Finnish tribes have always preserved tenaciously their own language and national customs. They possess a considerable body of interesting popular poetry and songs dating back to very early times. A small part of this material was gathered together in 1822, but to Elias Lönnrot is due the honor of making a complete, systematic collection. He lived among the Finnish peasants and gathered the poetry by

(1848 and 1860), "Stories of Ensign Stål," national in scope, dealing with the unsuccessful struggle of the Finnish people with the Russians in 1808–1809. Each of these poems is written in a different meter. They are intensely patriotic and gloriously poetical. Runeberg wrote with a classic simplicity. He represents an advance over the other writers of his time in the direction of realism and unconventionality.[1]

Sweden produced a considerable body of poetry during the last quarter of the century. Viktor Rydberg (1828–1895), international in scope and Classical in style, has left a great many imaginative and finished lyrics. Count Carl Snoilsky (1841–1903), whose life was spent mainly abroad, wrote descriptive poems, ballads, and a number of the choicest and most poetical of lyrics. Among the gifted poets that represent the wave of Realism which swept over Sweden at the close of the century, three are especially esteemed: Gutaf Fröding, poet of nature and of peasant life; Oscar Levertin, an introspective poet; and Verner von Heidenstam, extraordinarily popular, winner of the Nobel prize for literature in 1916, writer of poems at first personal and then national and highly inspirational in their appeal.

During the last century in Sweden poetry has transcended prose and dramatic literature. There have been many writers, however,

slow degrees. In 1835 some twelve thousand lines were published; in 1849 there appeared an edition of about twenty-three thousand lines, arranged in fifty runos, or cantos. This is the famous "Kalevala," which contains the old mythological traditions of the Finnish people in the form of epic songs. It was composed by a number of bards at various periods, and it possesses a characteristic Finnish quaintness and melancholy. Unlike other national epics it is largely domestic and lyrical rather than heroic and warlike. It opens with a poetical description of the origin of the world. There is other mythological material, but the poem has to do chiefly with the adventures of the three sons of Kalewa, and it involves a curiously interesting love story. "Kalevala" is written in an eight-syllable poetic form familiar to us in "Hiawatha." Longfellow utilized this verse in imitation of the verse of the old Finnish epic. The Kirby translation of "Kalevala" (two volumes) is obtainable in the Everyman's Series.

[1] Edmund Gosse has an attractive essay on Runeberg in his "Northern Studies." See also the translations in the valuable volume "Anthology of Swedish Songs," by Charles Wharton Stork, in the Scandinavian Classics series.

in these other fields. Ludvig Almqvist (1793–1866), remembered chiefly for his romances, was a versatile author and possessed an interesting personality. Fredrika Bremer (1801–1865), novelist and short-story writer, has achieved considerable fame throughout Europe. **Johan August Strindberg** (1849–1912) calls for more extended reference, as he is the chief representative of the modern Realistic school in Sweden and is considered by some to be the leading Swedish author. Strindberg was educated at the University of Upsala and later held positions as teacher, actor, journalist, and librarian. His play "Master Olof" (1878) and his realistic novel, or book of sketches, "The Red Room" (1879), were revolutionary in their influence. Two collections of stories,—"Married" (1884 and 1886),—his autobiographical novel, and his numerous plays have been widely read. A compressed bitterness, a fanatical hatred of woman, a marked gloom and pessimism, and certain vulgar traits of mind and life naturally repel the reader of Strindberg. Yet he possessed genius of a sort, united with great descriptive power, brilliancy, and originality.

There have been a number of interesting women writers in Sweden. In the recent period Ellen Key[1] has proved an influential lecturer, educator, and author. The popularity of **Selma Lagerlöf** (born 1858) has also passed beyond the limits of her own land. She has a strong imaginative and romantic turn of mind, and the variety of her work is especially noticeable. In 1907, at Upsala, she was given a laurel wreath and acclaimed as the most popular of living Swedish writers. Two years earlier she had secured the Nobel prize for literature. "Gösta Berling," "The Wonderful Story of Nils," "Jerusalem," "From a Swedish Homestead," "The Miracles of the Antichrist," and "The Emperor of Portugallia" are popular in Europe and America alike. The last-named book presents a remarkable study: its close is tragic and pathetic, but the earlier chapters are charming prose poems, each confined to a single vivid incident and each a little masterpiece.

[1] Pronounced Kay.

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Translations:

Volsunga Saga (Magnusson and Morris).
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Laxdæla Saga (Temple Classics). E. P. Dutton & Company.
About fifteen important volumes of translations from Scandinavian writers available in series published by American-Scandinavian Foundation, New York. Send for list.
Björnson. The Macmillan Company.
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Suggested Topics

The origin and general character of the sagas.
Striking scenes from the "Burnt Njal."
The "Volsunga Saga" and the "Nibelungenlied" compared.
The comedies of Holberg.
Tegnér and his poems.
A study of one of Björnson's peasant tales.
Brand and Peer Gynt—character studies and comparisons
The modern problem play as developed by Ibsen.
A study of "A Doll's House."
The plays of Strindberg.
Recent Norwegian fiction.
Selma Lagerlöf and her work.

CHAPTER XII

ENGLISH LITERATURE

The English People

At the dawn of authentic history the island of Great Britain was occupied by an Aryan people known as the Celts, the two main branches being the Britons in the south and east and the Gaels in the north and west. The various Roman invasions, together with the conquest and occupation of the land, extending from the coming of Julius Cæsar in 55 B.C. to the final withdrawal of the Romans about A.D. 410, had no effect of importance upon the Celtic people, the land, or the language. The English people dwelt originally along the North Sea from the mouth of the Elbe to Jutland. They were a Teutonic people, consisting of three tribes, the Angles, the Jutes, and the Saxons, from the first of which we have the words "England" and "English." These people, overrunning and conquering the present England in the latter half of the fifth century, became and have since remained the dominant element in the English race. There was of course some admixture of Celtic blood, but the Celts were almost entirely exterminated or driven into Ireland, Wales, and the north of Scotland. The Danish occupation (1013–1042) was too brief to make any decided contribution. The Norman Conquest (1066) resulted in the Normans' becoming English rather than the reverse. And in its subsequent history of nearly nine centuries, although subjected to foreign influences of great and lasting importance in many ways, the English stock has remained fundamentally the Anglo-Saxon with which it started.

That stock had at the beginning and has always retained certain characteristic traits. The most noticeable, perhaps, is the seafaring tendency. The English in their German home were "sea-wolves living on the pillage of the world," as an old chronicler puts it.

They have been sea-rovers and far wanderers ever since—and pirates as well, until piracy gave place to the establishment of colonies, protectorates, and spheres of influence. And so through the spirit of daring and hardihood and love of the sea the mighty British Empire has arisen. Another element in the English character has been its strong emphasis upon domestic life. The bond of kinship and the consistently high place of woman in the household have been especially prominent in English life and literature. In the early heathen poem of "Beowulf" Queen Wealhtheow occupies a chair beside her husband Hrothgar in the great hall. Another trait has been the insistence upon the idea of self-government in the political field, a survival of the primitive Anglo-Saxon assembly—a tendency to curb and restrain the ruler in the interest of the people. There is many a dark and humiliating page in English history, but in the long run that history shows a steady progress in the direction of government by the people. Such landmarks as Magna Charta, the Bill of Rights, the struggle between king and Parliament, and in our own times between the Lords and the Commons, between the mother country and its dependencies, between capital and labor, bear witness to the insistence of the English people upon this great political principle. One other quality of importance is the generally conservative temper of the English people. They have a very deep and strong regard for established conventions, institutions, and usages. "Every Englishman loves a lord," but, we are bound to add, only as long as he behaves himself. The Englishman's deep-seated conservatism goes hand in hand with a constant though very gradual modification of the existing order to form a better one. Let there be, says Tennyson,

> "Some reverence for the laws ourselves have made,
> Some patient force to change them when we will."

And there have been some very fundamental changes, which, however, have been nearly always accomplished little by little, by way of expediency and opportunism—sometimes even by sheer accident—rather than by revolution.

The English Language

What we have said of the English race holds true also of its language. It is a very rich, flexible, and composite language, but a very large proportion of the vocabulary of its common speech remains Anglo-Saxon. There has been very little borrowing from the Celtic or the Scandinavian, and from the Norman-French much less than has often been supposed. The Normans made no attempt to impose their language upon the English people. Norman-French prevailed only in the relatively limited circles of the court, the law, and the aristocratic and privileged classes. Subsequent intercourse with France is responsible for the great bulk of French terms in English. The dictionary reveals the fact that considerably more than half of our vocabulary is from the Latin and Greek. Much of the Latin came through the medium of the French; some of it, and also of the Greek, came through the revival of classical learning during the Renaissance; and some of it is due to the influence of science and its need of precision in terms. But the classical element in our language is the borrowed element—the speech of the educated and the cultured. The common man's vocabulary, that of the English Bible, and even that of many of our greatest poets are predominantly Anglo-Saxon. The English vocabulary has, of course, been further enriched by words brought home from all quarters of the world by crusaders, explorers, traders, and travelers. The result is an extremely composite speech, admirably suited to the production of a great literature.

The Anglo-Saxon Period

"Beowulf." The earliest English literature was the product of heathen times and a heathen people, although its repeated copying by the monks shows Christian insertions and attempts to give it a Christian coloring. The greatest of Old English poems is the splendid epic of "Beowulf," one of the most notable epics in world literature. It is probably of continental origin and is usually held to date, in its present form, from the later years of the seventh century. A very brief summary of the story must suffice:

Hrothgar, king of the West Danes, is harried by a cruel fen-monster, Grendel, who breaks into his great mead-hall by night and devours his beloved thanes. The youthful Beowulf, of Gothland, hears of the ravages of Grendel and with fourteen of his tried companions goes to the relief of Hrothgar. There is a splendid description of the fight between Grendel and Beowulf. The latter tears the monster's arm from his body and leaves him to crawl away and die in the mere. This is the first episode of the poem. The second deals with the struggle between Beowulf and the mother of Grendel, fiercer and more vindictive than her son, who renews the raids upon the hall of Hrothgar. To accomplish his quest Beowulf descends to the bottom of the darksome mere, and there for a whole day the struggle continues. Finally Beowulf slays the monster and reappears on the surface with the head of Grendel, and there is great rejoicing. The third episode recounts the struggle of Beowulf in his old age and in his own land, over which he has ruled for many years as king, with a monstrous fire-dragon, the terror of his people. Beowulf seeks out the dragon in his cave and slays him, but receives his own death wound in the struggle.

The poem is full of fine passages which reveal the life and habits of the English people of the earliest known times. The vivid descriptions of the solitary coast guard, of the ship of Beowulf, of the great mead-hall of the thanes and their armor, of the kingly Hrothgar and his noble queen, of the glittering hoard of the fire-dragon, and, most of all, of the sea—the "swan-road," with its heaving billows and stinging spray—are as fine as any in our literature. The spirit of hardihood and loyalty on the part of the thanes and of gracious appreciation on the part of King Hrothgar is vividly brought out. And the combats are narrated in a swift and vigorous and splendidly graphic way.

As to its form, the poem consists of nearly thirty-two hundred lines in the characteristically Anglo-Saxon alliterative form of verse. Here are two lines, to illustrate:

"Þa com of *m*ore under *m*ist-hleoðum[1]
Grendel gongan; Godes yrre bar."

There came from the moor under the misty-slopes
Grendel going; God's wrath he bore.

[1] þ and ð = th.

It will be seen that each line is divided into two parts bound together by accented syllables beginning with the same letter in the first half-line and in the second. The number of unaccented syllables is variable, giving the rhythm an irregular and somewhat broken but strong and rugged quality. The language is condensed, energetic, colorful, with no extended similes as in the classical epics, but with an occasional compact metaphor such as the "sea-steed" (the ship) or a typical epithet such as "ring-giver" (the king). The poem in its present form is probably the result of a combination of several originally distinct narratives. The poet (scop) and the reciter (gleeman) occupied honored places in court.

The other poems of the heathen period—"Widsith" ("The Far Wanderer"), "Deor's Lament," "Waldere," and "The Fight at Finnsburg"—are short, some of them being mere fragments, and though significant are of much less importance than the great epic of "Beowulf."

The Northumbrian school. The Anglo-Saxons were converted to the Christian faith toward the end of the sixth century by missionaries from Rome and from Ireland. Under the influence of the latter, Northumbria became the center of a considerable literary culture, fostered largely by the monasteries of Whitby and Jarrow. The most important works of the Northumbrian school are Bede's "Ecclesiastical History" (written in Latin), the poems attributed to the inspired swineherd Cædmon, including poetic paraphrases of Genesis, Exodus, and Daniel, and the poems attributed to Cynewulf, the most notable being "Christ," "Elene," "Andreas," and "The Phœnix." These last reveal an appreciation of the softer and milder aspects of life and nature, the result, doubtless, of the influence of the Christian faith. Aside from the religious pieces just mentioned, there have survived several short poems on secular themes; for example, "The Wanderer," "The Seafarer," "The Wife's Complaint," and "The Lover's Message." Practically all of the original Northumbrian writings perished in the Danish invasions, and they have come down to us only in the form of copies in the West Saxon dialect.

Alfred the Great delivered his country temporarily from the rule of the Danes and established the overlordship of the West Saxons. He did his best to encourage learning and literature among his people. His reign covered the years from 871 to 901. He himself translated from the Latin certain works which he judged best suited to be of use to the clergy and the people. These were the four gospels, Bede's "Ecclesiastical History," Pope Gregory's "The Pastoral Care," Boethius's "Consolations of Philosophy," and Orosius's manual of history and geography. He also gave an ordered course and amplified form to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which had been begun long before his time and was continued after his death to the year 1154. Alfred's age was an age of prose, the only poetry of note being the two graphic and exceedingly spirited narratives of "The Battle of Brunanburh" and "The Battle of Maldon"—the latter the final utterance of Anglo-Saxon poetry.

The Anglo-Norman Period

The language. The Norman Conquest was followed by the submergence of English as a literary language for a period of about a hundred years, although English continued to be the spoken language of the great mass of the people. With its reappearance in Layamon's "Brut," about 1205, it was no longer Anglo-Saxon but what is known as Middle English, which prevailed until about the end of the fifteenth century. It was English with a French infusion and largely stripped of the complicated inflections of the Anglo-Saxon. The new verse form retained the rhythmic accent of the Anglo-Saxon, abandoned the device of alliteration, and adopted from the French the very important element of rime.

The reappearance of English literature and its course from about 1150 to almost the end of the fifteenth century are marked by the rise and flourishing of the romance, a favorite literary form of the French invaders.[1] The tales present a remarkable variety. Some of

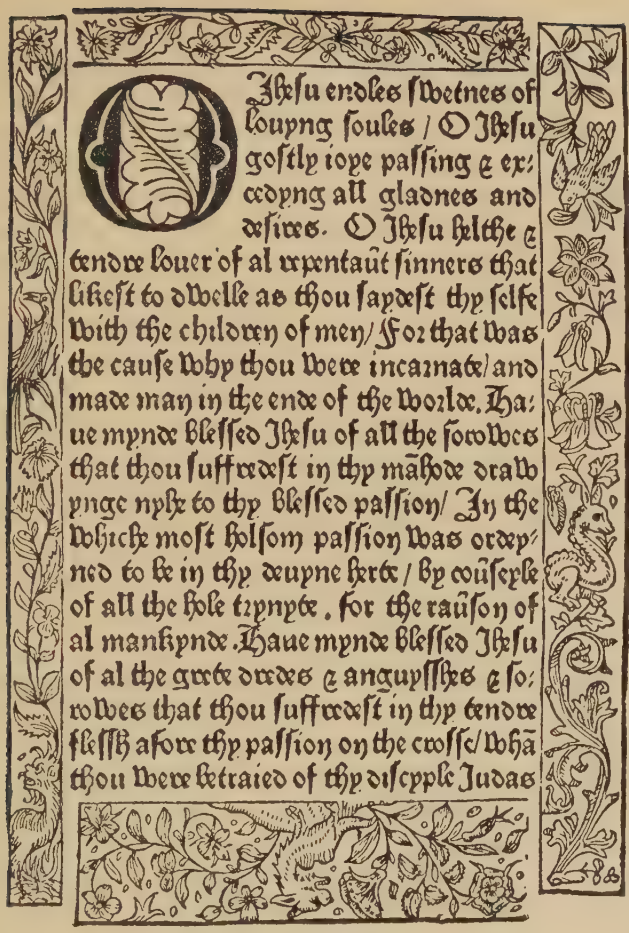
[1] The reader is referred to the chapter on French literature for a description of this form.

them are in prose and some in verse. They are often of interminable length, loose and rambling in plot, and rather conventional in characterization. They deal with Charlemagne and Roland; with Troy, Alexander, and Æneas; with the English or Scandinavian heroes, including Guy of Warwick and King Horn; and, most significantly of all, with King Arthur and the Round Table.

The Arthurian cycle of romances is one of the richest manifestations of genius in English literature, as it is also in French. The earlier romances of the cycle include Layamon's "Brut," narratives about Merlin, Lancelot, Tristram, and the Holy Grail, and the delightful and finely poetic tale of "Gawain and the Green Knight." The year 1485 witnessed the printing by Caxton of the splendid collection of tales in prose by Sir Thomas Malory, "Le Morte d'Arthur," translated from unknown French sources. The various separate groups of tales are here clustered, somewhat loosely, about the dominating figure of the king. Malory's narrative is rambling, discursive, and somewhat incoherent; but he presents in glowing colors the high deeds of the Round Table, the pathos of the unrequited love of Elaine, the light-hearted gayety of Gareth, the tragic love potion of Tristram and Isolt, the saintly Galahad, the awful splendor of the mystic grail, the shadow of evil in the guilty love of Lancelot and the queen, the confusion of the last battle, and the passing of the king on the shadowy barge.

"Now put me into the barge, said the king. And so he did softly; and there received him three queens with great mourning; and so they set them down, and in one of their laps King Arthur laid his head. . . . And so then they rowed from the land, and Sir Bedivere beheld all those ladies go from him. Then Sir Bedivere cried: Ah my lord Arthur, what shall become of me, now ye go from me and leave me here alone among mine enemies? Comfort thyself, said the king, and do as well as thou mayest, for in me is no trust for to trust in; for I will into the vale of Avilion to heal me of my grievous wound: and if thou hear never more of me, pray for my soul."

Throughout the entire book runs the high and fine devotion to the nobler elements of that lofty chivalry that lends to all romance its garment of beauty.



O Jhesu endles swetnes of
louyng soules / O Jhesu
gostly ioye passing & ex:
cedyng all gladnes and
desires. O Jhesu helthe &
tendre louer of al repentaũt sinners that
likest to dwelle as thou saydest thy selfe
with the children of men/ For that was
the cause why thou were incarnate/ and
made man in the ende of the worlde. Ha:
ue mynde blessed Jhesu of all the sorowes
that thou suffredest in thy mãhode draw
ynge nyhe to thy blessed passion/ In the
whiche most holsom passion was ordey:
ned to be in thy deuyne herte / by coũseyle
of all the hole trynyte. for the raũson of
al mankynde. Haue mynde blessed Jhesu
of al the grete dredes & anguysshes & so:
rowes that thou suffredest in thy tendre
flessh afore thy passion on the crosse/ whã
thou were betraied of thy discyple Judas

CAXTON'S PRINTING

From the "XV O's," *c.* 1491. The fifteen prayers, so called from the fact of their all commencing with the letter *O*

One of the most exquisite lyric poems of the time is "The Pearl," a bereaved father's vision of his little dead daughter Margaret, written in regular rimed stanzas with the touching refrain "My precious pearl withouten spot." The French lyric impulse also had its effect in the production of numerous songs, love lyrics, and devotional pieces. Among these are the deeply spiritual "Love-Rune" of Thomas de Hales, the delightful "Cuckoo Song," and the graceful and charming lyrics "Alisoun" and "Lent is Come with Love to Town"—fresh, spontaneous, and finely expressive of the essential lyric spirit.

The Age of Chaucer

Geoffrey Chaucer represents the full-blown flower of English medieval literature. He is by far the greatest poet of the Middle English period and one of the greatest in world literature. He was born in London about the year 1340, of a well-to-do family of merchants. He was employed in the household of Edward III, saw military service and a period of imprisonment in France, was ransomed by the king, was elected member of Parliament, occupied many official positions under the royal patronage, was sent on a number of diplomatic missions, two of which took him to Italy, was pensioned for his various services, and died in 1400. His extremely wide and varied contact with the life of his times, his keenly observant eye, his appreciation of all the currents and backwaters of the age, and his shrewd and richly humorous nature made him the ideal interpreter of the life in which he lived and moved.

In his early years Chaucer was strongly under the influence of the literary form and sentiment of France. The product of these years was "The Book of the Duchess"—a tribute, upon her death, to the wife of John of Gaunt—and a graceful translation of a portion of the popular allegorical French poem "The Romance of the Rose." His journeys to Italy brought him into contact with the flower of the Italian Renaissance in art, architecture, scholarship, civic splendor, and, most of all, poetry—that of the

great masters Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. The Italian influence is clearly evident in "The House of Fame" and "The Parliament of Fowls." More important, however, is the long narrative poem "Troilus and Creseide," based upon Boccaccio's "Filostrato." Another poem born of his Italian experience is "The Legend of Good Women," adapted from a Latin work of Boccaccio. The best portion is the prologue, with the poet's vision of ladies and with the highly poetic passage about the daisy, Chaucer's best-beloved flower.

The highest product of Chaucer's genius is "The Canterbury Tales." They represent his so-called English period and are the product of his fully matured powers. The structure is the favorite frame-scheme, like that of Boccaccio's "Decameron." Thirty-two pilgrims, including the poet himself, are journeying to Canterbury, and to beguile the time agree to tell two stories each on the way and two on the return journey. Of this projected total of one hundred and twenty-eight tales, Chaucer actually wrote only twenty-four, and some of these he left unfinished. The tales are of many types—romance, fabliau, legend, sermon, etc. But better than the tales themselves is the incomparable Prologue—a description and characterization of the various pilgrims, so vivid and penetrating as to constitute a veritable panorama of almost the whole of English medieval society. Nowhere in our literature will the reader find more graphic portraits than those of the grave and courteous knight, the gay young squire, the dainty prioress, the worldly monk, friar, and pardoner, the humble and deeply religious parson, the coarse and vulgar shipman, the garrulous wife of Bath, and the studious clerk of Oxford.

"A clerk ther was of Oxenford also,
That un-to logik hadde longe y-go.
As lene was his hors as is a rake,
An he nas nat right fat I undertake;
But loked holwe, and ther-to soberly.
Ful thredbar was his overest courtepy;[1]

[1] Coat.

For he had geten him yet no benefyce,
Ne was so worldly for to have offyce.
For him was lever have at his beddes heed
Twenty bokes, clad in blak or reed,
Of Aristotle and his philosophye,
Than robes riche, or fithele,[1] or gay sautrye.[2]
And al be that he was a philosophre,
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;
But al that he mighte of his freendes hente.[3]
On bokes and on lerninge he it spente,
And bisily gan for the soules preye
Of hem that yaf him wher-with to scoleye . . .
Souning in moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche."

Mr. Arthur Symons says of Chaucer,

"His whole vision of life is the vision of the poet; his language and versification have the magic of poetry; he has wisdom, tenderness, a high gravity, tinged with illuminating humor; no one in our language has said more touching and beautiful things, straight out of his heart, about birds and flowers and grass."

Chaucer's poetic form and diction are careful, rich, varied, pointed, and musical to an almost unparalleled degree. Besides the poems mentioned he tried his hand, and always with masterly success, at such intricate French lyrical forms as the *rondel*, *virelai*, and *chant royal*. His favorite meters, however, are the four-stress couplet of the early poems, the seven-line stanza of "Troilus" and some other poems, and the five-stress couplet, the favorite form in "The Canterbury Tales." Chaucer's influence upon the English language, moreover, was of decided importance. In his hands it became a flexible, richly varied, and finely fused medium—the essential basis of modern English.

"Piers Plowman." William Langland, a contemporary of Chaucer, is the supposed author of "Piers Plowman." This poem is one of the earliest and most intense outcries against a harsh and unjust social order, an outburst of indignation at the worldliness of the Church and the cruel indifference of the ruling class to the

[1] Fiddle. [2] Harp. [3] Get.

burdens of the poor. Christ is conceived of as mystically incarnate in the lowly plowman Piers, who refuses to lead anxious inquirers to the truth until they set their hand to the honest labor which is his own lot and portion. Langland thus explores a field to which Chaucer was largely indifferent. The poem is a composite of several versions, probably the work of more than one hand, and is rude and cumbersome in style and confused in structure; but it contains splendid passages of intensely vivid description and of deep moral earnestness. It is written in the Old English alliterative form.

The ballads. The century following Chaucer (the fifteenth) is remarkably barren of noteworthy writers. The only important exceptions to the generally low level of literature in this century are the "Morte d'Arthur" (see page 360) and the ballads. A ballad is a short narrative poem adapted for recitation or chanting. The origin of ballad poetry has been a subject of much controversy. Its source is certainly in humble life, and its development probably the result of gradual variations and additions by individual reciters. The date of composition or formation is uncertain, but the greater part of the three hundred and six extant ballads of England and Scotland probably originated in the fifteenth century. The ballads deal with a wide variety of themes. Some, such as "Chevy Chase" and "Sir Patrick Spens," present historical subjects. There are ballads of love and domestic life, such as "Fair Annie," "Clerk Saunders," "Katharine Jaffray," and "Edward." There are those that deal with the supernatural, such as "Thomas Rymer," "Kemp Owyne," and "The Wife of Usher's Well." And there is a whole series of ballads of outlaw life grouped about Robin Hood and his exploits in Sherwood Forest. The customary ballad form is the four-line stanza of alternate four-stress and three-stress lines, the second and fourth lines riming. The following stanza from "Sir Patrick Spens" will illustrate:

"Half o'er, half o'er to Aberdour,
'Tis fifty fadom deep,
And there lies guid Sir Patrick Spence,
Wi' the Scots lords at his feet."

The use of refrain and repetition is constant. The lines are often irregular and halting, the rime imperfect, the verse crude and awkward, and the transitions abrupt. But for intensity of dramatic effect, for suspense and often poignant suggestion, for concrete and vivid diction, for masterly use of nature as background and accessory, and, above all, for vital contact with the realities of humble and local experience our ballad literature is most significant.

The Period of the Renaissance

The Renaissance spirit. The new interpretation of life known as the Renaissance began to manifest itself in England in the reign of Henry VII (1485–1509), was further developed in that of Henry VIII, and came to its splendid maturity in that of Elizabeth (1558–1603). In a general way it was characterized by the same manifestations as in Italy and France, but was somewhat later in reaching its culmination. Its beginnings were marked by a revived study of the classics, a movement usually designated by the term "Humanism," which had its center chiefly at Oxford and came through the channels of Italian culture and art. Hand in hand with the Humanist movement went the religious Reformation, reaching a crisis in the rupture of Henry VIII with the Pope and moving on through the reign of Elizabeth to the Puritanism of the seventeenth century. Another important element was the break-up of the feudal system and of the various medieval institutions involved in it. The Renaissance was therefore chiefly a movement toward the liberation and expansion of individual personality. It was powerfully accentuated during the reign of Elizabeth by the presence of a deep nationalistic and patriotic impulse consequent upon the decisive victory over the Spanish Armada in 1588, by the expansion of world view attendant upon the voyages of discovery to America and India, and by the wide dissemination of literature made possible by the establishing of the printing press. The Renaissance movement was worldly and materialistic in essence, but the Reformation, while going hand in

hand with it in its liberation of the individual conscience, acted definitely as a corrective to its prevailingly secular character.

Among the earlier literary exponents of the Renaissance impulse the most important were Wyatt and Surrey, who introduced into England certain Italian forms,—particularly the sonnet and blank verse,—and whose poems are remarkable for sincerity, lightness, and grace; and Sir Thomas More, whose prose treatise "Utopia" presents the author's conception of an ideal society, together with some very severe strictures upon that of his own time.

Elizabethan lyric poetry. The reign of Elizabeth and that of James I witnessed an outburst of literary activity unparalleled in English history. The lyric impulse was strong and found a rich and harmonious response. Much of the lyric poetry of the time is contained in the popular form of miscellanies, bearing oftentimes rather fanciful titles, such as "A Paradise of Dainty Devices," "A Handful of Pleasant Delights," "England's Helicon," and others. A favorite literary exercise was that of the sonnet sequence. Almost every poet of note felt called upon to produce such a series, addressed either to a real or to an imaginary mistress. Among the sonnet sequences of the time we note especially that of Samuel Daniel to "Delia" and of Michael Drayton to "Idea." More important is the series of Sir Philip Sidney, "Astrophel and Stella," addressed to a real person, Penelope Devereux, who, in spite of the poetic appeal of her lover, became the wife of another. The issue of Spenser's "Amoretti" was more fortunate, as he was happily married to the lady who inspired his sonnets. There has been much speculation as to the identity of the persons to whom Shakespeare's hundred and fifty-four sonnets were addressed. They represent the absolute high-water mark of sonnet-writing in our literature, and are supremely poetic in tone, mood, structure, and exquisite music of phrase. They are in the typical English form, as practically all Elizabethan sonnets are—three quatrains and a closing couplet. Here is a specimen:

"When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,

And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoanèd moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end."

Other lyric forms were abundant also and were developed to a high degree of perfection. The "Hymns" and "Epithalamion" ("Bridal Song") of Spenser have never been surpassed in their kind. Shakespeare's reputation as a poet would be among the highest if he had written nothing more than the score or so of exquisite lyrics distributed through his plays—such immortal songs as "O mistress mine, where are you roaming?" "Take, O, take those lips away," "Hark, hark! the lark," "Under the greenwood tree," and others.

The narrative poetry of the period was hardly less important, but, with the exception of that of Spenser, must be passed over with the mere mention of Marlowe's "Hero and Leander" and Shakespeare's "Lucrece" and "Venus and Adonis," poems of great sensuous beauty and great imaginative power.

Edmund Spenser (1552–1599), called by common consent "the poet's poet," was, apart from Shakespeare, the greatest poet of the age. He received his education at Cambridge, acquiring there his insight into Renaissance culture and classical philosophy. There followed four years as courtier in London and the formation of influential friendships. The rest of his life, except for three visits to London, was spent in Ireland as secretary to the lord deputy, whose harsh and vindictive rule seems to have met with Spenser's entire approbation. Kilcolman Castle near Cork, occupied by the poet, was plundered and burned in one of the frequent outbreaks of the time, and Spenser, whose hope of further official preferment was disappointed, died a poor man in London.

We have mentioned Spenser's sonnets and some of his other lyric poems. "The Shepherd's Calendar" and "Colin Clout's Come Home Again" are in the pastoral style, an artificial and conventional form in which rustics discourse on love and nature. His great work is "The Faerie Queene." As Spenser planned it, it was to consist of twenty-four books, twelve on the personal and twelve on the social, or civic, virtues. He completed only six books, but even so the poem is of vast bulk. It is a monumental tribute to the queen, the most elaborate poetic compliment ever paid to a sovereign. It is cast in the mold of the romance of chivalry, with Ariosto's "Orlando Furioso" as a model. But, unlike Ariosto, Spenser has a much deeper motive than the merely narrative one. The story is hung with the veil of religious, political, and moral allegory, through which the figures move as in a dream. The six books which Spenser completed glorify the six virtues of holiness, temperance, chastity, friendship, justice, and courtesy. Spenser deliberately adopted an archaic spelling and vocabulary (mostly inaccurate, by the way) to lend an atmosphere of remoteness to the figures and incidents of his poem. The form is a modification of Ariosto's, known as the Spenserian stanza, and was frequently employed by later poets. It is admirably suited to the theme and tone of the poem. We quote a passage from the first book, to illustrate Spenser's versification and poetic style.

EDMUND SPENSER

"And more, to lulle him in his slumber soft,
A trickling streame from high rock tumbling downe,
And ever-drizzling raine upon the loft,
Mixt with a murmering winde, much like the sowne
Of swarming bees, did cast him in a swowne:
No other noyse, nor peoples troublous cryes,
As still are wont t'annoy the walled towne,
Might there be heard; but carelesse Quiet lyes,
Wrapt in eternall silence farre from enemyes."

Spenser's poetry, and indeed most nondramatic poetry of the period, is characterized by an intensity of emotion,—even when, as frequently, it is a wholly imaginary emotion,—by an abounding vitality, and by a vividness and often gorgeousness of color and harmony of sound. It is with few exceptions lacking in the virtues of simplicity and directness, the narrative poems, including "The Faerie Queene" itself, being overelaborated, involved, rambling, and more or less confused. It is surcharged with fantastic metaphor and poetic "conceits" of style, far removed from the naturalness of real speech. But these defects serve only to accentuate its rare poetic qualities.

Minor prose writers. Some of the noteworthy prose works of the time were Roger Ascham's educational treatise "The Schoolmaster," Raleigh's "History of the World," Holinshed's "Chronicles" (the source of a number of Shakespeare's plays), and Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Polity," a fine piece of grave and stately writing. Lyly's "Euphues" set the fashion of a style known as euphuism—elaborate, ornate, fantastic, artificially balanced, and full of strange and complicated metaphors. Lodge's "Rosalynde" is a pastoral romance in this style, the source of Shakespeare's "As You Like It." Under the spell of euphuism also is Sidney's "Arcadia," a long-winded and much-meandering pastoral romance, with charming half-poetical passages scattered through it, to say nothing of the actual lyrics, into which, like the other romances of the day, it frequently breaks.

Bacon. The most important prose writer of the Elizabethan age was Francis Bacon (1561–1626). He was a courtier and place-

hunter, skilled in the devious ways of political intrigue, a man of finely intellectual temper but of unscrupulous conduct, rising to the high office of Lord Chancellor under James I only to pass to imprisonment and disgrace as a bribe-taker and to end his days in retirement clouded by his broken reputation. In his "Novum Organum" (written in Latin) and his "Advancement of Learning" Bacon makes his great contribution to modern scientific method—a careful exposition of the inductive type of reasoning, an almost revolutionary departure from the Aristotelian deductive logic, upon which the entire structure of medieval scholasticism had been reared.

For the student of literature, however, it is the "Essays" that constitute Bacon's importance. They are upon a wide range of topics —the conduct of life, statecraft, intellectual culture, landscape gardening, and many others. Through them all runs the worldly wisdom of the writer—his keen analysis of human nature and his counsels of practical advantage and prudence. Only rarely does Bacon rise to the clear height of a noble or disinterested ideal. And there are frequent side lights upon his own checkered and badly streaked career. His style is incisive, clear, extremely compact, and epigrammatic—a pronounced departure from the fantastic wordiness of euphuism.

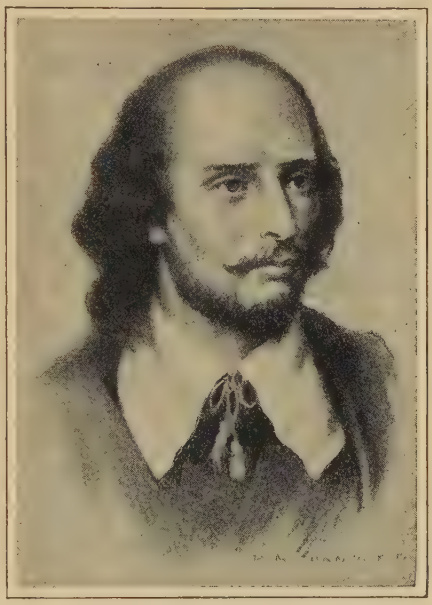
Drama before Shakespeare. The crowning glory of the Elizabethan period, and indeed of the whole course of English literature, is the dramatic production of the time. So far as the previous development of English drama is concerned, its course followed that of France so closely that the story need not be repeated here. It took its rise in short impersonations introduced at Christmas and Easter into the church liturgy. It passed on through the various mystery and miracle cycles in the hands of the trade gilds, through the abstract moralities like "Everyman," and through the short interludes, mostly secular and sometimes even farcical, chiefly by John Heywood. And it emerged at last into the regular if somewhat rough and stilted form of Udall's "Ralph Roister Doister" in comedy, Sackville and Norton's "Gorboduc" in tragedy, and the work of the immediate predecessors of Shakespeare.

Among these predecessors the name of Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593) stands out most prominently. His four great plays, "Tamburlaine," "The Jew of Malta," "Faustus," and "Edward II," are remarkable for an intensity of emotional power and for a new and almost unparalleled excellence in the handling of blank verse. Less significant are the rather crude tragedies of Thomas Kyd and the plays upon classical and Biblical themes by George Peele. Much of the work of these writers is marred by an awkwardness of structure and a highly wrought and often extravagant diction.

William Shakespeare was supremely fitted, by birth and training, by his contact with the movement and spirit of his time, by his fellowship with friends and associates, and above all by his lofty poetic imagination, to give to English drama its highest and noblest expression. He was born at Stratford-on-Avon, in Warwickshire, in 1564, the date commonly accepted being April 23. His parents were of good stock, Saxon on his father's side and Celtic on his mother's—a heritage that formed a happy combination in their gifted son. The slow and quiet round of life in the little town, and its natural environment of river, meadow, and wood, were favoring influences. It is probable that Shakespeare attended the excellent grammar school of the town and that he had to leave because of family reverses. At the age of eighteen he married Ann Hathaway. There is little foundation for the conjecture that his married life was unhappy. Two years later he made his way to London, gravitating as if by instinct to the playhouses. He advanced rapidly through the stages of adapter and reviser of plays and actor in minor rôles to those of recognized playwright, member of the principal dramatic company of the time, and shareholder in the Globe and Blackfriars theaters. He wrote between 1590 and 1610 an average of two plays a year. From these various sources he received a considerable income, purchased the best dwelling in Stratford, and about 1611 retired from active life. He died on his fifty-second birthday, April 23, 1616.

Of Shakespeare's sonnets and narrative poems we have already spoken. His early work in the drama, chiefly comedy, is marked by lightness of touch, gayety, sparkling repartee, vitality, and

brilliant if somewhat shallow characterization. The principal comedies are "Love's Labor's Lost," "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," "The Comedy of Errors," and "A Midsummer Night's Dream." The one historical play of the period (omitting those only in part by Shakespeare) is "Richard III"—a superb study of concentrated villainy, in the manner of Marlowe. Among the tragedies we have the matchless love story of "Romeo and Juliet."



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

The second stage of Shakespeare's work is introduced by "The Merchant of Venice," with its fine character conceptions of Portia and of Shylock. This period includes also the rich and mellow and broadly human plays "Much Ado about Nothing," "As You Like it," and "Twelfth Night," constituting the supreme flower of English comedy. There is nothing in our literature to set beside the masterly characterizations of Beatrice, Rosalind, and Viola—portraits in the great gallery of Shakespeare's feminine characters. The historical plays of this period are "King John"; "Richard II," one of the most deeply pathetic of all historical studies; "Henry IV," containing one of the world's master creations in comedy, the incomparable old rogue Falstaff; and "Henry V," perhaps the greatest treatment in our literature of a popular national hero. Among the tragedies are "Julius Cæsar" and "Hamlet." The first is almost faultless in dramatic structure, in interdependence of episode,

and in the working out of an essentially tragic conflict in the character of Brutus. As for "Hamlet," no man has yet "plucked out the heart of his mystery." The tragic greatness of the central character, struggling under "the burden and the weight of all this unintelligible world," the luminous insight into human motives and passions, and the terrible sweep of forces ruthlessly crushing the innocent with the guilty—the fragile flower Ophelia with the base and wicked king—give it a place among the world's greatest dramas.

"Hamlet" forms a fitting introduction to the third stage of Shakespeare's work, often referred to as the great tragic period. "Othello" reveals to us the wreck of a deeply tender and greatly simple human soul,—"one who loved not wisely but too well,"—and in Iago portrays a type of subtle, insidious, and unalloyed villainy not equaled in literature. In "Macbeth" an essentially noble nature founders upon the rock of ambition, closed in the grip of a relentless fate, striking blindly and desperately at the forces of retribution besetting him at the end. "King Lear" presents the utter desolation of an aged father,—"a very foolish, fond old man, fourscore and upward,"—which for tragic intensity of suffering is unapproached in the literature of the world. "Antony and Cleopatra" is a parallel, in terms of mature life, of the youthful passion of "Romeo and Juliet," but taking the deeper moral tone of a struggle between the higher nature of Antony and his infatuation for the Egyptian queen, the "serpent of old Nile," —the most complex of Shakespeare's feminine creations, "infinite in her variety." "Coriolanus" is the exponent of the patrician pride of Rome in its flawed greatness, a bitter opponent of the "many-headed multitude," going down before the mingled good and evil of the plebeian class. Even the comedies of this period—"All's Well that Ends Well," "Troilus and Cressida," and "Measure for Measure"—are deeply colored by an irony of circumstance that is almost tragic in its tone.

The plays of Shakespeare's closing period are of another sort. They reveal the temper of a man who has passed from storm into the deep and quiet waters of safe harborage. They present his

profoundest thought upon human life with its perpetual struggle between good and evil forces; but there is an assured insistence upon the faith that good will overcome evil, and man be reconciled to life. The three great plays of this period are "Cymbeline," with the lovable figure of Imogen dominating its course; "The Winter's Tale," with its splendid embodiment in Hermione of utter forgiveness for a great and terrible wrong; and "The Tempest," Shakespeare's final judgment upon life, presenting man as master of his fate and exercising a beneficent control over all the forces of his environment, although realizing at the same time that

> "We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on; and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep."

The plays of Shakespeare differ from the classical drama of antiquity on the one hand and from the modern so-called problem play on the other. They break with the classical tradition in being fundamentally romantic. Their romantic quality appears in two significant aspects. The first is the abundant and varied representation of action on the stage; especially, in the tragedies, scenes of battle and bloodshed—scenes which in the Greek drama were practically always presented through the more restrained device of the narrator or messenger. The second and perhaps more important romantic element is that of mingled light and serious tone. The Greek tragedy was tragic, and the Greek comedy comic, throughout; but the great Elizabethan plays were broadly inclusive of all the content of life. There are tears in many of the comedies, and there is laughter in many of the tragedies. Unity of tone, together with most of the other classical unities, is thus sacrificed to a more generous and normal presentment of life. As for the distinction between Shakespearean and modern drama, it lies mainly in the fact that with Shakespeare the forces at work are personal forces, that individual suffering is due to individual weakness or wrong, and that society in its generic sense is hardly recognized at all. In the modern play, on the other hand, the conflict is usually between the individual and society in one or more of its phases.

It must not be assumed that Shakespeare's work is perfect. He is capable, especially in his earlier plays, of an affected diction and artificial figures of speech, occasional passages of bombast, incongruities of tone, and frequent disregard of dramatic economy. These faults, however, he almost wholly outgrew in his later plays. It must be admitted also that he has apparently little sense of the heroic in the common man or of dramatic possibilities in his experience. To offset this, we must remember that Shakespeare's kings and other great personages are thoroughly humanized and subject to the same hopes and fears as our common humanity.

"Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown,"

says the troubled King Henry.

"No more but e'en a woman, and commanded
By such poor passion as the maid that milks,"

says Cleopatra. It is true also that Shakespeare has little sense of the tragedy involved in the entanglement of man with the social forces and conventions of his time. But to say this is only to say that Shakespeare revealed his own period and not ours. Not even the genius of Shakespeare could divine the totally changed meaning which the word "society" was to assume three centuries later.

Whatever may have been his shortcomings, he remains the master spirit of English literature. It was no exaggeration for his friend Ben Jonson to say of him, "He was not of an age but for all time." It is above all else this universality of Shakespeare's genius—its familiarity with the whole expanse of human nature, with all types in all situations—that constitutes the source of his greatness. "What a piece of work is man!" we hear him say through the mouth of Hamlet, who may perhaps be regarded as on the whole, among all of Shakespeare's characters, most fully representative of the poet himself. And it is to man that Shakespeare comes with the illuminating vision of one who sees clearly his heights and depths, his glory and his shame. "The purpose of playing," says Hamlet again, "is to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to

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By William Shakeſpeare.

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nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure." And we may well believe this to have been in Shakespeare's mind the purpose of the playwright also. For we shall have far to seek for any such consistent and adequate and fundamental grasp of the realities of our common human experience as we find in Shakespeare's pages. And together with his insight goes his unparalleled power of execution—of putting into the form of speech and action and dramatic expression the truths of human life which his eye beheld. In his mature work this ability to give outward form to an inner idea is exercised with a sureness and appropriateness and economy of effect that is little short of miraculous. Dogberry, Shallow, sweet Ann Page, the young prince Mamillius, Cassio, Capulet, Enobarbus, Mariana, Sir Toby,—even these minor characters (and the list might be many times extended) bear the impress of a creative artist's hand in their individual completeness and sufficiency. It is fundamentally this vision of the seer, joined as it is in Shakespeare with the hand of the master artist, that has made him the supreme dramatic poet of the modern world.

Shakespeare's contemporaries in the field of drama were sufficiently numerous and significant to make the age a great one even if he himself were left out of account. But he towers so high above them that the best we can say is that they rise occasionally to the levels upon which he almost habitually moves. His intimate friend Ben Jonson cultivated the so-called "comedy of humors," in which a typical temperament is exploited in a dramatic way, as in his "Every Man in his Humor." Jonson's tragedies are mostly on classical subjects—"Sejanus" and "Catiline" are typical—and are rather heavy and laborious. His satirical comedies—"Volpone," "Bartholomew Fair," and, greatest of all, "The Alchemist"—are keen and incisive, sometimes almost savage, attacks upon the failings, errors, and foibles of his time. He produced one effective pastoral play, "The Sad Shepherd," and a number of elaborate masques. Deserving of mention also are the poetic if not very dramatic plays of George Chapman; the remarkable series of plays produced in collaboration by Beaumont and Fletcher; Thomas

Dekker's plays upon themes drawn from humble life, especially "The Shoemaker's Holiday"; and Thomas Heywood's effective dramas of domestic life.

Shakespeare's successors. Of Shakespeare's immediate successors in the drama the most notable were John Webster, a writer of intense poetic power but of violent and overwrought incident, as shown in "The White Devil" and "The Duchess of Malfi"; Thomas Middleton, whose plays, though rather loosely constructed, contain many finely poetic passages; John Ford, who inclined chiefly to pathos and melancholy, as in "The Broken Heart"; Philip Massinger, whose "New Way to Pay Old Debts" is one of the best comedies of his time; and James Shirley, who in his brilliant prose plays, such as "Hyde Park" and "The Lady of Pleasure," shows himself a precursor of the Restoration comedy. In 1642, under the pressure of the Puritan régime, the theaters were closed, and so remained for eighteen years.

The Puritan Reaction

The Reformation. The gradual passing of the Renaissance spirit was accompanied by a deepening and intensifying of that of the Reformation. Puritanism was an extension of the movement which, having broken with Rome and established the Church of England, advanced to a searching criticism of the abuses involved in the new establishment. The literature of the period between the late Elizabethans and the restoration of the Stuarts (1660) is deeply colored by the seriousness of this great religious movement. It was a time of soul scrutiny and of decision upon the most momentous of all human issues—the relation of man to God. The joy of life, which was the distinguishing mark of the Elizabethan literature, gave place, therefore, to a deepening seriousness in that of the first half of the seventeenth century. The religious issue went hand in hand with a political one—that of the contest between king and Parliament. The Civil War (1642–1649) and the stern theocratic dictatorship of Cromwell put an end for all time to the theory of the divine right of kings.

One of the earliest fruits of the new religious movement was the translation of the Bible known as the Authorized or King James Version. The reader is referred to the section on the literature of the Bible (Chapter III) for the discussion of this noble achievement.

Minor poets. The poetry of the Puritan period was largely under the influence of the Elizabethan form and style and is especially indebted to Spenser for much that is best in it. The faults of Spenser and his followers, however, are quite as much in evidence, particularly the overworking of metaphor and poetic conceit. The poems of the preacher-mystic John Donne are illuminated by strange flashes of light and fervor. George Herbert's devotional lyrics reveal a depth of religious feeling. The poetic phrasing of Giles Fletcher exerted a considerable influence on Milton. Richard Crashaw is the poetic spokesman of the Catholic faith. Henry Vaughan's lyrics express a keen interest in nature and in the world beyond. Of the pastoral poets Robert Herrick is the most notable. He produced many a delightfully poetic picture of rural custom and incident, distinguished by a refreshing lightness, grace, and sincerity. The so-called Cavalier poets—particularly Carew, Lovelace, and Suckling—in their love poetry and their songs of loyalty to the king's cause have a fine ring of sincerity, but are often rather shallow and sometimes licentious.

John Milton. All the poets we have mentioned are, however, stars of only the third or fourth magnitude when compared with Milton, who takes rank next after Shakespeare as the greatest English poet. He was born in London, in 1608; his father was a notary—a broad-minded Puritan, in whose home books and music and good company and cultured conversation were much in evidence. Milton spent two years at Cambridge University and there formed the high resolve to adopt poetry as a career and to write something "which the world would not willingly let die." He took the utmost pains to qualify himself for this great mission, by assiduous study and by the cultivation of a sound, strong, gracious nature, without which he did not believe the writing of great poetry to be possible. The five years following his university work were

spent in quiet but unremitting study of the classics. He had the advantage of a journey to Italy in 1638, and all that such an experience implies to a poetic nature. For the next twenty years he was absorbed heart and soul in the great political and religious struggle, acting as Latin secretary to Cromwell, writing pamphlets in defense of the cause of Parliament, and becoming blind in the course of that activity. With the Restoration he was compelled to go into hiding for a time, to escape death at the hands of the new régime. His closing years were passed in seclusion and in the composition of his great epic "Paradise Lost" and other late poems. He died in 1674.

JOHN MILTON

Milton's literary activity falls naturally into the three distinct periods of his life—youth and preparation, public career, and retirement. The "studious cloister's pale" at Cambridge and the happy leisure of the years that followed are marked by the production of "L'Allegro," "Il Penseroso," "Comus," "Lycidas," and a few lesser poems. They are all in the popular pastoral form, but are quite free from the artificial conceits and unreal sentiment of that form as practiced by most other poets. Indeed, even in these early poems Milton achieved an almost faultless style—concrete, restrained, and yet adequate, sufficiently varied to suit the several themes dealt with, and of a remarkable musical quality. "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" are descriptive poems portraying the gayer and graver aspects of the poet's youthful experience. They have

the freshness, spontaneity, and measured joy of a deeply poetic and sensitive nature awake to the delights of rural landscape and life on the one hand and of midnight hours of study and contemplation on the other. Nowhere in our literature have these satisfactions of the eye and of the mind found so happy an expression. "Comus" is cast in the form of a masque and is perhaps the most nearly perfect example of this form in English literature. In this poem Milton presents a more deeply serious theme, revealing beneath the surface narrative of pastoral adventure an indictment of the viciousness of the English court and of the shallow and empty pursuits of human life in general. The truly virtuous and constant soul is rare indeed, but when it does appear among us it is invulnerable to all hostile circumstance and temptation. In "Lycidas" Milton's tone becomes increasingly serious and even stern. He mourns the death of his young college friend Edward King, a poet of some promise and an aspirant for holy orders. "Lycidas" is the noblest of all elegiac poems in English. There is about it a dignity and elevation, a superb richness of color, sound, and movement, that put it almost in a class by itself. Milton's burning indignation against the worldly and place-hunting clergy of his time is nobly expressed and is prophetic of the great national struggle that was so close at hand.

During the period of the Civil War and of the Protectorate Milton was busy with his official duties and for twenty years found little time for poetry, except for an occasional sonnet—usually on some theme of public concern. In his sonnets Milton adopted the Italian form, which is marked by a more involved rime than the Elizabethan, and which has been the prevailing style since his time. Milton's great service to the cause of religious and political reform in these years is attested by an abundant mass of prose of a very high order on the great issues involved. "The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates" is a defense of the Protectorate in its course against the king. The "Tractate on Education" shows how far ahead of his times Milton was on that important subject. The "Areopagitica" is a bold and uncompromising demand for complete freedom of speech and of the press. "Give me," says Milton, "the

liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely, above all other liberties." The student of Milton should not ignore his prose.

The principal fruit of Milton's retirement and advanced years was the great epic "Paradise Lost." It takes rank with the master epics of world literature—with the work of Homer, Virgil, and Dante. It is in twelve books, comprising a total of about ten thousand five hundred lines. The opening passage announces the lofty theme of the poem and the purpose of the poet:

> "That to the height of this great argument
> I may assert eternal providence,
> And justify the ways of God to man."

On the surface of the burning lake of Chaos lie Satan and his hosts, dazed by their fall from the height of heaven. The fierce pride of Satan, however, reasserts itself, and he appeals to his hosts, who respond loyally and range themselves under the banner of Azazel,

> "Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled
> The imperial ensign; which full high advanced,
> Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
> With gems and golden luster rich emblazed,
> Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
> Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds;
> At which the universal host up sent
> A shout, that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
> Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night."

They hearken to Satan's proposal to continue the warfare upon God by an attempt at the betrayal of man, then newly created. Book II pictures the host assembled in the magic palace of Pandemonium for counsel.

> "High on a throne of royal state which far
> Outshone the wealth of Ormus or of Ind,
> Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
> Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
> Satan exalted sat."

The arch-enemy, as a result of the deliberation, assumes the task of seeking out the newly created world and betraying the race of

man. Sin and Death, the warders of Hell gate, open the way for Satan's dusky flight to earth. In Book III we are transported to the throne of God with the splendid passage beginning

"Hail, holy light! offspring of heaven first-born!"

There is a touch of sublime pathos in the poet's realization of his own blindness:

"Thus with the year
Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, nor the sweet approach of even or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine."

God the Father reveals to the Son the sinister design of Satan, and the Son freely offers himself as a ransom for the guilt of man about to be consummated. Book IV presents a picture of the yet untroubled state of Adam and Eve in Paradise, with the impending evil in the person of Satan hovering near and maturing his plans. Books V, VI, and VII contain the warning and counsel of the archangel Raphael to Adam, and his account, at Adam's request, of the war in heaven, the casting-out of Satan and his host, and the creation of the new world and a new order of creatures to dwell in it. In Book VIII Adam replies with a statement of his own experience in Paradise. Book IX reaches the epic climax in the yielding of Eve to the temptation of Satan, in the guise of the serpent, to taste the forbidden fruit, and the participation of Adam in her guilt.

"Earth felt the wound, and nature from her seat,
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe
That all was lost."

Book X relates the judgment of God, in the person of the Son, upon the new race for its transgression; the coming of Sin and Death to make their abode in the earth; and the heavy remorse of Adam and Eve, lightened only by the ray of hope contained in God's promise that the seed of the woman should sometime crush the serpent. Books XI and XII present the coming of the archangel Michael at God's command; his revelation to Adam of the future history of

mankind, culminating in the announcement of the redemptive work of the Son of God; and his leading Adam and Eve out of the gates of Paradise.

> "They hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,
> Through Eden took their solitary way."

"Paradise Lost" is in blank-verse form. The characteristics of Miltonic blank verse are long, sustained sentences and extreme variation in the placing of pauses—qualities which make it a supremely effective vehicle for his thought. "Paradise Lost" is our greatest example of poetry in what is known as the grand style. The lofty dignity and severity of its lines, the rolling, organlike music of its prolonged periods, the gorgeousness of its color, the sharp concreteness of its imagery, the impressive portrayal of the great archrebel Satan, and the vast sweep of its cosmic movement combine to lend it an awesome power in keeping with the greatness of its theme. Milton's theological background is of a relentless and forbidding sort, but the appeal of the poem, like that of the "Divine Comedy," is largely independent of its doctrinal dress and goes deep into the bases of universal human experience with the problems of good and evil.

The two other poems of Milton's retirement are "Paradise Regained" and "Samson Agonistes." The former, while marked in places by the poetic power of the great epic, is, on the whole, of less merit. "Samson Agonistes" is probably the best example in English of a drama in the Greek form. The weight and solemnity of the dialogue passages and the lyric height and range of the interpretative choruses give it an impressiveness closely akin to that of the Greek tragedies. There is also a personal element in the poem. Samson is the blind and disappointed and sorely harassed Milton. The drama is a fitting farewell to this world of one of its noblest souls.

Among the prose writers of the age of Milton Sir Thomas Browne (1605–1682) occupies a commanding place. In his "Religio Medici" and "Urn Burial" he gives expression to a series of speculations and reflections upon the permanent realities of

life in a style which for compression, eloquent Latinity, and high-sounding rhythm and melody has seldom been equaled. The lovable Izaak Walton, linen draper by occupation and rambling fisherman by the gift of the gods, wrote in his "Complete Angler," as no other has ever written, of the quiet delights of what he called "the contemplative man's recreation."

Bunyan. It remains to speak of John Bunyan (1628–1688), the humble Bedfordshire tinker, whose "Pilgrim's Progress" is the most famous prose allegory in our literature and one of the most widely read books of all time. It conceives of the life of man as "a pilgrimage from this world to that which is to come"—from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City. In its vivid incidents of the Slough of Despond, the Interpreter's house, Vanity Fair, the Valley of the Shadow of Death, the combat with Apollyon, the martyrdom of Faithful, the castle of Giant Despair, the Delectable Mountains, and a score of others, it presents the Christian experience in its lights and shadows so plainly that he who runs may read. And in his penetrating characterizations, of Mr. Worldly Wiseman, Ignorance, Piety, Mr. Greatheart, and others, Bunyan gives us a graphic picture of a large section of the society of his times. His style is happily simple and direct, homely, plain-spoken, couched almost wholly in common Saxon terms, and elevated to a dignified level by a constant use of Biblical language. It is the book of the lowly, and as such has had an influence second only to that of the Bible itself as a consolation to troubled souls. The severity of its Puritan theology is only an accident of the times and is easily disregarded by the modern reader.

The Classical Movement

The Restoration. With the death of Cromwell and the collapse of the Protectorate Charles II was recalled from France (1660), and the historical period known as the Restoration was inaugurated. The Puritan heritage was not lost, but the harsh and forbidding aspects of its later almost fanatical severity made the reaction which accompanied the Restoration not unintelligible. Interest in the

pleasures of this world reasserted itself with an intensity proportioned to the long period of repression. The court of Charles II was the most corrupt and licentious that English history has ever known. Literature, taking its cue from the royal patronage and the aristocratic fashions of the time, reflects the shallowness, cynicism, and immorality of its sources. The absence of any high moral ideal or any real poetic imagination makes the literature of this period decidedly secondary in value, and it need not, therefore, detain us long.

The long residence of Charles and his circle of friends in France was largely responsible, upon their return, for the introduction into England of the Classical theory of literary form, then at the height of its influence in France. It was classical in its extreme regard for the form (the spirit was never truly apprehended) of the Greek and, even more, of the Latin authors of ancient times. In brief, its distinguishing marks were conservatism, regularity, conformity, common sense, and a strong emphasis upon the intellect rather than the emotions. It had the merit of producing a clear and well-ordered style and acting as a necessary corrective to the extravagance and overelaboration so largely typical of the preceding age. But the literature of the Classical period was, even in its poetry, essentially a literature of prose.

John Dryden (1631–1700) was the leading exponent in England of the earlier stage of the Classical movement. He was in his youth almost a Puritan, one of his early poems being a eulogy on the death of Cromwell. Two years later we find him an ardent Royalist, welcoming the return of Charles in a flattering poem entitled "Astræa Redux." He was rewarded by his appointment as poet laureate and by a number of other official positions. His best-known poems, such as "Absalom and Achitophel" and "Mac Flecknoe," are satires upon political episodes of the day. His "Religio Laici" is a defense of the Established Church, and "The Hind and the Panther" of the Church of Rome, to which he had become a convert. In fact, much of Dryden's work, and much of his conduct also, was trimmed to catch the wind of advantage from one quarter or another. He was a prolific writer of heroic plays, tragedies, and

comedies, but his work as a playwright is of secondary importance. As a literary critic and dictator, from his little throne in Will's Coffeehouse, Dryden exercised a very great and generally wholesome influence. So far as form is concerned, he fulfilled the Classical requirements in the use of the heroic couplet (five-stress lines riming in pairs), which he employed with excellent effect in almost all his poems and plays except the comedies. On the accession of William III, in 1688, Dryden was thrown upon his own resources and had to resort to translations and quantity production to make a living.

The Restoration spirit is revealed most typically and freely in its comedy, which is consistently brilliant, shallow, cynical, worldly, and grossly licentious. The work of William Congreve is, on the whole, less offensive than that of most of his contemporaries, and his best plays, "Love for Love" and "The Way of the World," are among our finest examples of the "comedy of manners," a type in which the influence of Molière is strongly in evidence.

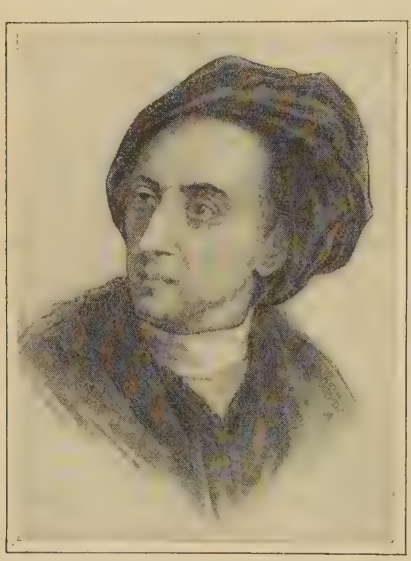
Among the prose writers we must mention the two famous diarists Samuel Pepys and John Evelyn. Their journals cover about the same period (1660–1670) and constitute a mirror of the times more vivid and satisfying than almost any other writing of this period. The worldly-wise Pepys, man of affairs and of multitudinous official duties, runs the whole scale of comment, from feminine apparel to the Great Fire, with an exactness of detail and an unconscious humor that make his diary very rich reading. Evelyn is more dignified and ceremonious, is honestly and deeply grieved at the moral laxity of the times, though himself a devoted Royalist, and in certain passages, such as that on the death of his little boy, strikes a note of appealing tenderness and pathos.

The writers of the first half of the eighteenth century were almost to a man committed unreservedly to the Classical régime inaugurated by Dryden. It was definitely an age of criticism rather than of creation, and of adherence to accepted standards rather than of the raising of new ones. Its taste was better regulated than that of the Restoration period, and its moral tone decidedly higher.

Swift. Satire continued to hold its place as a favorite vehicle of expression. The most powerful and in some respects the greatest of the satirists of the time was Jonathan Swift (1667–1745). He was born in Dublin; was educated at Trinity College; entered the Church; was for a time high in the councils of the Tory party; intrigued for preferment, but had to content himself with the deanship of Saint Patrick's at Dublin, an office which he thoroughly detested; and fell a victim to insanity four years before his death. The bulk of his writing is in the form of controversial pamphlets on ecclesiastical and political topics. The satire in these is of the bitter and sardonic type. His "Modest Proposal," for example, is a perfectly calm and cool suggestion for preventing the children of the poor in Ireland from becoming a burden to their parents, by having them killed and eaten, such a fate being infinitely preferable to the wretched lot which would be theirs if they were allowed to grow to maturity. Somewhat more pretentious is his "Travels of Lemuel Gulliver," in which he satirizes the petty political wire-pulling of the times, and, indeed, the contemptible smallness (as he saw it) of the human race in general. Swift's style is plain, clear, and quite unadorned, though of great subtlety and intensity.

Addison and Steele. Much milder and more good-natured, and therefore more effective than that of Swift, is the satire of Addison and Steele. Joseph Addison (1672–1719) was an Oxford man, a model of the most perfect good breeding and probity of character, and punctilious in the discharge of his many official duties. He was the author of "Cato," which is our most perfect example of a tragedy in the rigidly Classical form of the French dramatists. Richard Steele (1672–1729) was an Irishman, a man of varied and irregular life and of a buoyant and light-hearted temperament. His comedies are in the Restoration manner, but are quite free from the coarseness and immorality of the Restoration plays. The literary collaboration of Addison and Steele in the two series of periodical essays known as the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* is of great importance in our literature. These little essays have as their motive an attempt to reform the manners of the age. They deal with almost all the aspects and types of character in the town life

of the times—the coffeehouse, the theater, Vauxhall gardens, the aspiring poet, the lady's man, the coquette, the country squire (in the person of the hearty and lovable Sir Roger de Coverley), the waterside, Westminster, and a hundred other topics. There is no attempt at an analysis of society, a determination of fundamental causes, or a shouting of the battle cries of great reform. The authors are content to play upon the surface of life in a tone of amused raillery and to improve the taste and manners of their times by the gentle art of ridicule. The polished elegance, urbanity, and sureness of Addison's style, and the rich human sympathy of Steele's, give them a commanding place among the great essayists of English literature.



ALEXANDER POPE

Pope. The poetic dictatorship of the period was in the hands of Alexander Pope. He was born in London in 1688, and died in 1744. The fact of his Catholic parentage cut him off from official preferment, and this, together with his physical frailness and imperfection, reacted upon the none too generous temperament with which he was endowed. He was envious, malicious, spiteful, and sometimes dishonest. And yet, in spite of these handicaps, and by virtue of a most assiduous industry, he rose to be the most conspicuous poet of his age. His early "Pastorals," his "Windsor Forest," and his "Eloïsa to Abelard" contain slight—very slight—touches of imaginative response to nature and emotion. But his more characteristic work is completely dominated by reason and by the French Classical form. "The Rape of the Lock" is

our most finished example of a miniature epic—an exquisitely polished bit of satire upon the utter triviality and emptiness of fashionable life. The "Essay on Criticism" is a poetic exposition of the French literary theory of the day, which so completely prevailed in England in Pope's time. The "Essay on Man" is Pope's attempt at a criticism of life. It accepts the religious system known as deism,[1] and the social theory of "enlightened selfishness," based upon the easy-going and rather shallow assumptions that "whatever is, is right" and that in the long run "self-love and social are the same." "The Dunciad" is an ill-tempered and generally unjust satire upon the author's many literary enemies. Pope's translation of Homer, based chiefly on Latin and English versions, and carried out largely with the help of assistants, is as far removed from the real Homer as was the eighteenth century itself in time and spirit.

Pope's style exalts correctness as the prime virtue. He is our greatest master in the use of the heroic couplet, which he handled with a deftness, ease, and polished elegance that are little short of amazing. A few lines from the "Essay on Man" will serve as an example:

> "Two principles in human nature reign;
> Self-love to urge, and reason to restrain;
> Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call,
> Each works its end to move or govern all:
> And to their proper operation still
> Ascribe all good; to their improper, ill."

Many of Pope's subtly and sharply pointed epigrams have become almost proverbial; for example, the following:

> "Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare,
> And beauty draws us with a single hair."

> "The proper study of mankind is man."

> "And fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

> "To err is human, to forgive divine."

[1] The deists acknowledged a personal God, but rejected supernatural revelation and the authority of the Church.

The novel. The eighteenth century witnessed the rise of the English novel properly so called. The medieval prose and verse romances and the Elizabethan pastoral narratives are indeed stories, but have virtually none of the organization that distinguishes the real novel. With Daniel Defoe (1661–1731) we have the first writer who can justly claim the title of novelist, and even his work lacks the element of developed plot. The striking qualities in Defoe's art as a novelist are extreme vividness, minuteness and exactness of detail, and great faithfulness to the real experience and temperament of his imagined characters. His "Journal of the Plague Year" is a fictitious narrative, but so graphic and circumstantial are the details, and so natural is the narrator's reaction to them, that the account sounds like that of an eyewitness. In "Robinson Crusoe" the same fidelity to the circumstances and to the gradually enlarging environment of the shipwrecked mariner, and the same sureness of insight into his psychological development, are even more effectively employed. These qualities appear also in "Captain Singleton," "Moll Flanders," and "Colonel Jack," types of the picaresque, or rogue's, novel, so popular especially in Spain.

Samuel Richardson (1689–1761) was a moralist, the principal aim of his novels being, as he says, "to inculcate virtue." He adopted the epistolary form, which lends a kind of dramatic quality to his novels, and he was the first English writer to give careful attention to plot. "Pamela" is the story of a housemaid who repels the designing advances of her master. "Clarissa Harlowe" is upon much the same theme, but the setting is that of semi-aristocratic life. "Sir Charles Grandison" is a record of the dutiful discharge, by the hero, of many heavy obligations that run counter to his hopes and desires. Some of Richardson's characters are well drawn, but his didactic tone and his somewhat sentimental and persistent praise of "virtue" become tiresome to the reader.

It was in frank opposition to this sentimental element that Henry Fielding (1707–1754) produced his first important novel, "Joseph Andrews,"—a parody on Richardson's "Pamela," in which the virtuous serving-man Joseph resists the amorous wiles of

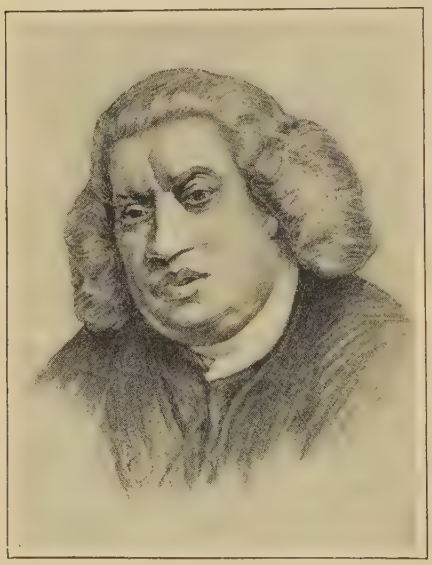
his mistress. "Tom Jones," Fielding's greatest novel, is a record of the checkered career and adventures of a hearty, vigorous, strong-willed young blade, whose virtue is not at all equal to that of Joseph in the earlier novel. It is not often that Fielding rises to a real appreciation of the finer qualities of experience, but he does so at times in his third notable novel, "Amelia." Fielding is energetic, rather roughshod, wholesomely scornful of all false sentiment, not gifted with any great insight into the deeper or more complex sides of human nature, and frequently coarse, but not immoral.

Tobias Smollett (1721–1771) introduced into his novel "Roderick Random" the important element of life at sea. For the rest, he is a kind of minor copyist of Fielding, but is more largely given to digression and to cheap and rather heavy humor. He has almost none of Fielding's sympathy with human impulse and human frailty. His other important novels are "Peregrine Pickle," "Ferdinand, Count Fathom," and "Humphrey Clinker."

Laurence Sterne (1713–1768), clergyman, sentimental dilettante, and man of the world, produced in "Tristram Shandy" one of the strangest novels in our literature. It is a protest against the reigning worship of form and is in itself the extreme of utter formlessness. The hero, except for the circumstances of his birth, hardly appears in the story at all. The novel, in a formal sense, has neither beginning nor end, but is a shapeless jumble of incident, opinion, and sentiment. And yet it is a remarkable book, for out of the confused mass of material there emerge, through the deft and subtle and apparently accidental introduction of the minutest detail here and there, the delightfully human portraits of Uncle Toby, Squire Shandy, and the designing Widow Wadman. Just such figures emerge also from the random details of the "Sentimental Journey." Sterne's sentiment is in reality the most flagrant sentimentalism, seeking occasions for the exhibition of emotion, and his coarseness is usually without the justification that Fielding may plead. But in the art of subtle and line-by-line portraiture he has no superior.

Johnson. The literary "dictator" of the latter half of the eighteenth century was Samuel Johnson. He was born in Lichfield

in 1709 and died in 1784 After a brief period as "poor scholar" (working his way) at Oxford he went to London, and there for many years lived in the direst poverty, eking out his existence by literary hack work. His poems and his verse tragedy "Irene" are in the satirical vein and formal style of Dryden, Pope, and Addison. His "Dictionary of the English Language" was a labor of eight years, undertaken to keep the wolf from the door. His independent and manly rejection of Chesterfield's offer to accept the dedication of this work when it seemed an assured success, after his contemptuous repulse of Johnson's earlier appeal, marked the end of the patronage of English literature by the aristocracy. Johnson's periodical essays in the *Rambler* and the *Idler* are in the *Spectator* form, but have little of the grace, lightness, and ease of the work of Addison and Steele. His moralizing romance "Rasselas" was written in a week's time to defray the expenses of his mother's funeral. His edition of Shakespeare was a work of great industry and painstaking care. He was pensioned by the king in 1762 and thereafter was free from the heavy burden of poverty.



SAMUEL JOHNSON

From the portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds

Johnson was the center and dominating influence of the Literary Club, formed in 1764, a circle which included Burke, Goldsmith, David Garrick,—the greatest actor of his time,—the famous portrait painter Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Johnson's biographer James Boswell. The only important literary product of these latter years

was "The Lives of the Poets," in which, though insistent upon the conservative principles of the Classical school, the criticisms are often admirably just and fair. These years, however, and the Club circle reflect Johnson the conversationalist. In the art of conversation, although doing most of the talking himself, he was one of the few great masters in our literature. The faithful Boswell, in his

JOHNSON'S HOUSE AND STATUE, LICHFIELD

"Life of Samuel Johnson," has left us a monument to this aspect of the great man's life—and, indeed, of his whole personality—so painstaking, exact, circumstantial, and just as to make his work one of the great biographies of literature. Johnson's faults were not a few. He was a thoroughgoing Tory, not greatly open to new ideas, uncouth and overbearing in manner, and ponderous and long-winded in his over-Latinized style. But the sterling independence and warm-heartedness of his character, and the eminent fairness and good sense of his writings, go far to counterbalance these defects.

Oliver Goldsmith was the most lovable and thoroughly human of the circle that grouped itself about Johnson. He was born in 1728 at Pallas, County Longford, Ireland. His student days at the

University of Dublin were enlivened by frequent collisions with the proctors over champagne suppers and other forbidden pleasures. He tried to fit himself for the Church, for the law, and for medicine, and although he finally obtained the medical degree, his practice amounted to nothing. He tramped over a large part of France and Italy, playing his flute for his meals. In 1756 he returned to London, worked as a hack writer for the periodicals, enjoyed an occasional happy hour at the Club or with a few sympathetic friends, and died, in debt for his lodgings, in 1774. From the midst of his literary drudgery Goldsmith produced three great pieces of work, all of them typical of his own deep love for his fellow men. "The Deserted Village" is a poem, in the favorite heroic couplet form, descriptive of his native village in Ireland. It is comparable to Whittier's "Snowbound" in its loving reference to the old familiar places and associates of his youth. Nowhere shall we find more deeply sympathetic character sketches than those of the village preacher and the schoolmaster. The former reflects in a score of ways Goldsmith's own erratic, improvident, and generous nature. "The Vicar of Wakefield" is not a great novel from the technical point of view; but here again the gentle, gullible, unworldly Vicar Primrose is a reflection of Goldsmith himself, and one of the great figures in English fiction. "She Stoops to Conquer" is a comedy in Goldsmith's richest vein of kindly humor, in which satire finds no place. Though under the Classical influence in its form, the work of Goldsmith, in its tendency to idealize character and incident, in its loving regard for the far away and long ago, and in its affection for rural life and scenes, is in line with the coming Romantic movement.

Edmund Burke (1729–1797), one of the greatest political orators in English history, in his famous speech "On Conciliation with the Colonies" pointed out the way of wisdom, which George III and Lord North refused to take. For the greater part of twenty years he labored on the impeachment of Hastings for maladministration in India; and, although Hastings was acquitted, the efforts of Burke were followed by notable reforms in India. His essentially conservative and practical nature led him to what now

seems a false judgment on the French Revolution, which he bitterly opposed. But for logical and clear-headed and generally wise treatment of public questions the orations of Burke have seldom been surpassed.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751–1816), the most brilliant dramatist of the period, in "The Rivals" and "The School for Scandal" has pictured, quite in the manner of the Restoration comedy but without any of its immoral quality, the shallowness and empty gossip-mongering of the fashionable society of his times. These plays, together with Goldsmith's "She Stoops to Conquer," have held their place on the stage to the present day.

Beginnings of the Romantic Movement

Minor poets. The pendulum of literature is never at rest. At the very height of the Classical hostility to romance the Romantic revival began. The Classicists had done a necessary work and had done it well. English literature needed the sobering and chastening discipline which they imposed upon it. But as early as eighteen years before the death of Pope there began to be heard the voices of rebels in the camp. These voices proclaimed the superiority of nature to parks and trim gardens, of the medieval past to the sophisticated present, of dream and vision to reality, of the spiritual to the material, and of the individual soul to social customs, conventions, and institutions. In 1726 appeared the first of the poems of James Thomson (1700–1748). It was entitled "Winter" and was later expanded into "The Seasons." These poems mark the reëntrance into English literature of external nature as subject matter and of blank verse as a poetic form. In "The Castle of Indolence" Thomson makes use of the long-ignored Spenserian stanza and succeeds in recapturing much of Spenser's poetic tone and manner. The poems of William Collins (1721–1759), especially his "Ode to Evening," are in a vein of very delicate and tender poetic melancholy. Thomas Gray (1716–1771), scholar, recluse, and linguist, in his "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard," one of the most popular and dearly loved poems in our language, sings in ex-

quisitely musical quatrains of the hopes and fears, the daily round of pleasure and pain, of the humble and unremembered dead. Gray cultivated the ode also, and "The Bard" and "The Progress of Poesy" are among our best examples in that form. He translated ringing passages from the poetry of far-off Iceland. The poems of William Blake (1757–1827) are for the most part outpourings of mystical rapture by a man who dwelt in a world of vision and the visitation of spirits. Much of his writing is so incoherent as to be almost unintelligible. But some of his best short lyrics, such as those in his "Poetical Sketches," "Songs of Innocence," and "Songs of Experience," have an appealing simplicity and concreteness that are suggestive of Coleridge. We have also Bishop Percy's "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry"; the poetic imitations of medieval themes by the ill-fated young man of genius Chatterton; the dim and shadowy prose poems of Macpherson, attributed by him to the ancient Gaelic bard Ossian; the deeply grave and spiritual hymns and other devotional poetry of William Cowper; and the harsh and rugged but profoundly sympathetic poems of George Crabbe, picturing the lives of the poor in the fishing-village and the country borough.

Burns. The really great name in the list of early Romantic poets is that of Robert Burns. He was born in Ayrshire, Scotland, in 1759, of humble, devout, hard-working peasant parents. He had practically no systematic schooling and but few books to read. As he followed the plow, the sights and sounds and emotions of nature and of peasant experience ran riming through his mind, often to the tune of some popular old song, and in the evening hours he wrote out his poetic improvisations. Like Goldsmith, Burns lacked the prudence and worldly wisdom that are essential to material success; and, moreover, he was endowed with a vigorous, independent, and passionate nature that led him more than once into moral lapses for which there is no excuse, but possibly much extenuation. After his father's death the farm went badly, and Burns was on the eve of emigration to Jamaica in the hope of repairing his broken fortunes and darkened reputation, when he was invited to Edinburgh by a scholar friend. His little volume of published poems had at-

tracted the notice of the aristocratic world, and Burns suddenly found himself the center of an admiring circle of notables. On his second visit a year later, however, the novelty of his presence had worn off, and he was indifferently if not coldly received. He was disappointed and embittered, and went back to farming and to a small post in the excise service. But dissipation and discouragement told heavily upon him, and he died in 1796, at the age of thirty-seven.

ROBERT BURNS

No man ever put more of himself into his poetry than Burns or entered more heartily and feelingly into the varied aspects of human experience. There are an absolute frankness and sincerity about his work, and a freshness and vividness of first-hand contact with his subjects, that are a welcome relief from the formal correctness of the Classical writers. He cared nothing for "poetic material" or "poetic diction." For him the whole of experience was poetic, and his finest work is in the homely Scottish dialect to which he was born and bred. One need only recall the roistering fun of the "Jolly Beggars," the friendly humor of "Tam O'Shanter," the natural tenderness of the home feeling in "The Cotter's Saturday Night," the sly merriment of the poem "To a Louse" on seeing one on a lady's bonnet at church, the rich kindliness of the old farmer's New Year morning greeting to his old mare, the exquisite sympathy of the beautiful lyrics "To a Mouse" and "To a Mountain Daisy,"

the sterling independence of "A Man's a Man for a' That," the biting satire of "Holy Willie's Prayer," and the sympathy even with Old Nick himself in his "Address to the Deil" to get an idea of the range of Burns's genius. But it is as a writer of songs that Burns takes a commanding place in literature. He is the supreme song-writer of the world. There is hardly a human emotion that he does not express superlatively well. The mere mention of such beautifully simple lyrics as "John Anderson my Jo," "Comin' through the Rye," "Auld Lang Syne," "Bonnie Doon," "Willie Brewed a Peck o' Maut," "Highland Mary," "Bonnie Jean," "Duncan Gray," "Sweet Afton," "Scots Wha Hae," recalls to the lover of song a wealth of musical and lyrical power that is unmatched in the world's literature. Burns's life was a failure, as judged by ordinary standards, but he has left the world a priceless inheritance quite beyond the power of worldly success to offer.

Early Romantic fiction. The early Romantic tendency in fiction expressed itself chiefly in an exaggerated emphasis upon the remote, mysterious, and supernatural, which places it upon a level decidedly below that of the later and better-ordered work of Scott. This fiction is commonly labeled "Gothic romance," and the best examples of it are Horace Walpole's "Castle of Otranto," Beckford's "Vathek," and Mrs. Radcliffe's "Mysteries of Udolpho." The so-called "sentimental school," following in the wake of Sterne, finds its foremost representative in Henry Mackenzie, the hero of whose "Man of Feeling" "bursts into tears" upon every conceivable occasion. The novel of social protest too finds an early example in the "Caleb Williams" of William Godwin, social reformer and sympathizer with the French Revolution.

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MANLY. English Prose and Poetry (Ginn and Company). Also similar volumes by other publishers.

Series, Libraries, etc.:

English Men of Letters. The Macmillan Company.

Athenæum Press Series (for old English ballads, Elizabethan and seventeenth-century lyrics, Shakespeare's sonnets, and selections from Addison, Burns, Fielding, Gray, Collins, Herrick, the Morte d'Arthur, the pre-Shakespearean drama, Sheridan, Sidney, and Steele). Ginn and Company.

Mermaid Series of Old Dramatists. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Everyman's Library. E. P. Dutton & Company.

Bohn Library. Harcourt, Brace and Company.

Temple Library. E. P. Dutton & Company.

School series: Standard English Classics (Ginn and Company). Also similar series by other publishers.

Shakespeare:

Editions:

Cambridge (1 vol.). Houghton Mifflin Company.

Oxford (3 vols.). Oxford University Press.

Temple (40 vols.). J. M. Dent & Sons.

School texts: New Hudson (16 plays) (Ginn and Company). Also school series by other publishers.

Biography, criticism, etc.:

Abbott. A Shakespearean Grammar. The Macmillan Company.

Bartlett. Concordance to Shakespeare. The Macmillan Company.

Lee. Life of William Shakespeare. The Macmillan Company.

Nielson and Thorndike. The Facts about Shakespeare. The Macmillan Company.

Brandes. William Shakespeare, a Critical Study. The Macmillan Company.

Baker. Development of Shakespeare as a Dramatist. The Macmillan Company.

Moulton. Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist. Oxford University Press.

Moulton. Shakespeare as a Dramatic Thinker. The Macmillan Company.

Bradley. Shakespearean Tragedy. The Macmillan Company.

Ditchfield. The England of Shakespeare. E. P. Dutton & Company.

Thorndike. Shakespeare's Theatre. The Macmillan Company.

Winter. Shakespeare on the Stage. Moffat, Yard and Company.

Suggested Topics

Beowulf and Roland as epic heroes.

Cædmon.

The Canterbury pilgrims.

"Piers Plowman" as a social document.

Theories of ballad composition.

An Elizabethan song recital.

Spenser and Ariosto.
Bacon's view of life as revealed in the "Essays."
The English religious drama.
The story of Shakespeare's life.
The stage in Shakespeare's time.
London in Shakespeare's time.
Development of Shakespeare's genius.
Milton's prose.
"Paradise Lost" and "The Divine Comedy."
Scenes from "The Pilgrim's Progress."
The *Spectator*—its material and value.
Pope's "Essay on Man."
Pope's "Essay on Criticism."
One of the eighteenth-century novelists.
Johnson's personality.
Goldsmith as a man.
One of the early Romantic poets.
A Burns song recital.
Carlyle's estimate of Burns.

CHAPTER XIII

ENGLISH LITERATURE (CONTINUED)

With the opening years of the nineteenth century came the full tide of the Romantic movement in English letters. It was essentially an age of poetry, glorified by the names of Byron, Keats, Shelley, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and others. But the prose literature of the period includes names scarcely less illustrious—Sir Walter Scott, Lamb, Hazlitt, De Quincey. In point of time it covers less than forty years, reaching roughly from the publication of "Lyrical Ballads" by Wordsworth and Coleridge in 1798 to the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837. English Romanticism is of perennial interest because of its display of the enthusiasm and individualism of youth, its revolt against rigid rules of art, its imaginative fervor and sense of beauty, its use of the finest impulses of mind and heart.

The Poetry of Romanticism

Several poets of the Romantic period call for a brief study.

George Gordon, Lord Byron[1] (1788–1824) was born in London, was educated at Harrow and at Trinity College, Cambridge, published his earliest poems before he was twenty, proved a dazzling figure in the public eye, lived abroad in self-exile after a period of domestic unhappiness, and died at the age of thirty-six at Missolonghi, Greece, where he had gone to aid the cause of Greek independence. "That mighty genius," Scott described him, "which walked amongst us as something superior to ordinary mortality, and whose powers were beheld with wonder, and something approaching to terror, as if we knew not whether they were of good or evil."

[1] It will be noticed that the Romantic poets are not here treated strictly in their chronological order. The reader will bear in mind that 1798, the year of the publication of Wordsworth and Coleridge's "Lyrical Ballads," ushers in the age of Romanticism in English poetry.

The contemporary fame of Byron, especially on the Continent, where indeed he still has a much greater popularity than in England, was due to his brilliant personality and glorious sense of power and to the expression which he gave to the spirit of his age—revolt, freedom, self-reliance. His faults are obvious: personal coarseness and egotism, bombast, flippancy, arrogance. Yet he was a warm-hearted friend, he exhibited physical and moral courage, he loved freedom, and he hated hypocrisy. The following lines from "Manfred," the play which seems best to present the typical Byronic hero, give the measure of Byron himself:

> "This should have been a noble creature: he
> Hath all the energy which should have made
> A goodly frame of glorious elements,
> Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,
> It is an awful chaos—light and darkness—
> And mind and dust—and passions and pure thoughts,
> Mixed, and contending without end or order,
> All dormant and destructive."

While we find in Byron's poetry little magic, or subtle beauty, or real artistry, such as characterized the work of his fellow English poets, certain remarkable qualities, and these of no mean order, reveal themselves. Byron describes poetry as "the lava of the imagination, whose irruption prevents an earthquake." He displays, when at his best, energy, eloquence, volcanic power. His nature poetry, especially his descriptions of the sea, is deservedly famous; and as a satirist he has few rivals among English poets.

Such of Byron's lyrics as "Maid of Athens," "Stanzas to Augusta," and "She Walks in Beauty" and other poems included in "Hebrew Melodies," will always be popular; so also will his diary in verse, "Childe Harold," especially Cantos III and IV; his brilliant metrical romances "Mazeppa" and "The Prisoner of Chillon"; and the finest passages of his masterpiece, "Don Juan." The best of Byron's prose is almost as noteworthy as his best verse; and the man himself remains more interesting than either his prose or his poetry.

John Keats (1795–1821) lived his brief life in England and closed it in Rome, whither he had gone with his friend Severn in search of health. "The publication of three small volumes of verse," says Lord Houghton, "some earnest friendships, one profound passion, and a premature death . . . [are] the only incidents of his career."

Although Keats was born in humble circumstances and received only a modest education, he was fired as a youth with a love for poetry, and he lived in his early manhood in an intellectual atmosphere, surrounded by sympathetic friends. He early abandoned the profession of medicine and devoted himself to literature. Spenser influenced him deeply; his affinities were largely Elizabethan, though he was passionately fond of the Greeks and of Greek themes. To him and Shelley is chiefly due the honor of recovering the beauty of an earlier time; their influence is felt deeply to this day.

Keats's first work of consequence, "Endymion," was clearly immature, as he himself appreciated. The attacks upon it he did not choose to answer. "Praise or blame," he said, "has but a momentary effect on the man whose love of beauty in the abstract makes him a severe critic on his own work." Development came rapidly, and within three years his finest work was published: "The Eve of St. Agnes," "Lamia," "Hyperion," "Isabella; or the Pot of Basil," and his glorious odes.

Keats had a warm, affectionate nature, a passionate feeling for sensuous beauty, an acute sensitiveness to the appeal of eye and ear and touch. "Oh, for a life of sensations rather than of thoughts!" he said. His imagination reached out to every sensation of the moment, whether its source was in nature, or art, or human beauty. A temperament so ardent is apt to lack fiber; and Keats rarely shows appreciation for intellectual or spiritual beauty, though in his later work he had learned how to express the relationship of beauty to the finer human emotions, saying, "I have loved the principle of beauty in all things, and if I had had time I would have made myself remembered." It may be idle to conjecture what his development would have been had he lived; it is enough to say that his achievement in his brief span of years seems almost miraculous.

To read Keats's characteristic poems is to enter a world of pure delight, where one encounters at every turn rich imagery, splendid diction, color, rhythm, beauty. The very beginnings of these poems are an enchantment, as in "Hyperion":

> "Deep in the shady sadness of a vale
> Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,
> Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,
> Sat gray-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,
> Still as the silence round about his lair."

or in such famous first lines as

> "I stood tip-toe upon a little hill."

> "A thing of beauty is a joy forever."

> "Bright star! would I were steadfast as thou art."

> "Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,
> And many goodly states and kingdoms seen."

> "Lo! I must tell a tale of chivalry;
> For large white plumes are dancing in my eye."

Keats weaves a weird charm in "La Belle Dame sans Merci," one of the most subtle and suggestive of his poems. "Isabella," the less-known and more beautiful (though fragmentary) "Eve of St. Mark," and, most wonderful of all, the "Eve of St. Agnes" reveal such glowing imagery and magic that they must be classed with the best of Romantic narrative poems. Keats has also to his credit a group of sonnets worthy of the finest English traditions. Nor can we possibly forget his richly chiseled and artistic odes, which reveal new beauties after the hundredth reading: "Ode on a Grecian Urn," "Ode to Psyche," "To Autumn," "Ode to a Nightingale." Witness a single stanza from the last-named ode:

> "Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
> No hungry generations tread thee down;
> The voice I hear this passing night was heard
> In ancient days by emperor and clown:

Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn."

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822) was born in Sussex, of a fine old English family. At Eton he was looked upon as a delicate youth of excitable nature, and at University College, Oxford, as an attractive young man with a spiritual face and unworldly nature, eccentric in manner, and possessing a strong tendency toward radicalism. It is well known that he was expelled from college for his atheistic views; that he contracted an early romantic marriage with Harriet Westbrook; that he was gradually estranged from her and considered the obligations of marriage no longer binding; that he went to the Continent in company with Mary Godwin, whom he subsequently married after the death by suicide of his first wife; that during his last years he lived in Italy; that his life was tragically closed by drowning off the Italian coast; and that his grave is near that of Keats in the Protestant cemetery at Rome.

Naturally, perhaps, the genius and the high aspirations and idealism of Shelley were obscured to his generation by his unconventional ideas and the strange passages in his life. When he died, his poetry was but little known in England. The publication of his complete works in 1839 brought about a change. Dowden's full and sympathetic biography is but one of many important studies of the poet which have been made since that day. While Shelley's poems have not even yet become universally known, there is no doubt as to his position among the chief of English lyric poets.

Shelley lived in an idealistic world, a world of imagination and fancy, and he repeatedly shows an ethereal, soaring quality in his work. In contradistinction to Keats he was swayed emotionally by sympathy and understanding rather than by passion. He had a burning desire to free mankind from every kind of intellectual and political oppression. He reflected in his poems his own thoughts and feelings, his strivings for intellectual beauty, his longings and

sorrows and regrets. He hoped, as he himself said, to familiarize the imagination of his readers with "beautiful idealisms of moral excellence." His dreams were of love that involved sympathy and understanding, of a perfected world governed by liberty and justice and wisdom. "The spirit of Shelley," says Mr. Symons, "will always be a light to every seeker after the things that are outside the world. To watch him is to be filled with joy, to forget mean and trivial things, to share a rapture."

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

Only the early poems of Shelley are immature. He soon reached and maintained a high level of excellence, exhibiting a boundless skill in versification and in the expression of poetic images. His romantic poem "The Revolt of Islam" and his lyrical drama "Prometheus Unbound" display his curious philosophical ideas and are replete with melody and aspiration. "The Cenci" is a repulsive tragedy, the most powerful, perhaps, of English tragedies since Shakespeare, but it is the least characteristic of Shelley's work. It is in his matchless lyric poems, with their deep emotional appeal, that Shelley's fame chiefly resides. "The Cloud," "To a Skylark," and "Ode to the West Wind" are among the most exquisite lyrics in English. The intensity and yearning of "The Sensitive Plant"; the self-revealment of "Epipsychidion," "Lines Written among the Euganean Hills" and "Stanzas, written in Dejection near Naples," to mention no others; the exquisite sensibility which many of Shelley's

lyrics show to the spirit of the past, particularly to the magic of ancient Greece, must be felt by every lover of poetry.

"Adonais," the elegy written in memory of his friend Keats, marks the highest point of Shelley's lyrical power. It dwells lovingly in a classical atmosphere, and it recalls Milton's noble elegy "Lycidas." Shelley admired the genius and bewailed the fate of his fellow poet, but, after all, these circumstances did not affect Shelley as deeply as did the resemblance between Keats and himself and the foreboding that death would lay hold upon him in his youth as it had claimed Keats. It is this autobiographical element, and Shelley's matured philosophy of life as revealed in "Adonais," that make it, in addition to the sheer loveliness of the lines, so attractive. Two stanzas, taken from this masterpiece, will remind us of the lyric greatness of Shelley:

"All he had loved, and moulded into thought,
From shape, and hue, and odor, and sweet sound,
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
Her eastern watch-tower, and her hair unbound,
Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,
Dimmed the aërial eyes that kindle day;
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

. . . . . .

"Alas! that all we loved of him should be,
But for our grief, as if it had not been,
And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!
Whence are we, and why are we? of what scene
The actors or spectators? Great and mean
Meet massed in death, who lends what life must borrow.
As long as skies are blue, and fields are green,
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year to sorrow."

The next year Shelley had followed Keats to the grave.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772–1834), the friend of Wordsworth and his associate in the "Lyrical Ballads," which was to

mark the beginning of a new literary movement, was a philosopher and critic as well as a poet. His years of poetical production were indeed very few in number, being confined practically to the interval between 1797 and 1802. Coleridge, after his youthful period of schooling at Christ's Hospital and his uncompleted college course at Cambridge, had married and settled for a brief period in Bristol. Returning, however, in 1797 to his native region, he had taken a cottage at Nether Stowey, under the Quantock Hills. Presently there came to the neighboring town of Alfoxden William Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy, and the warm friendship which the two poets felt for one another proved of happy augury, for it inspired them in some of their best work. Together they planned "Lyrical Ballads" (1798). "It was agreed," Coleridge explained later, "that my endeavors should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith."

"The Ancient Mariner" was Coleridge's crowning contribution to this momentous volume of poetry. Add to this "France, an Ode," "Christabel" (in its earlier form), "Kubla Khan," and "Dejection, an Ode," all written before the close of 1802, and Coleridge's poems of consequence have all been named. He made a trip to Germany, which greatly quickened his philosophical studies; he spent four years in the region of the English Lakes, two in Malta and Italy, and a number of other semi-confused years here and there, a victim of the opium habit; and at last, in 1816, he settled at Highgate, London, where he remained until his death. "Coleridge sat on the brow of Highgate Hill," wrote Carlyle in his "Life of Sterling," "looking down on London and its smoke-tumult, like a sage escaped from the inanity of life's battle. . . . He had, especially among young inquiring men, a higher than literary, a kind of prophetic or magician character."

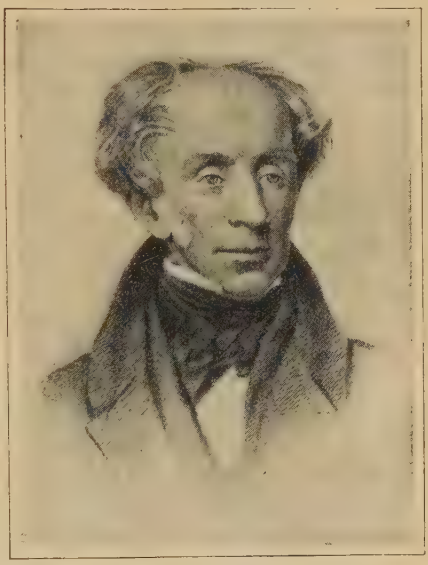
Coleridge had an emotional and sensitive nature, with a great capacity for friendship. His fondness for the mystical and supernatural, his interest in metaphysical speculations, his attraction to old

ballad themes, his sense of harmony and melody,—all these things are evident in his poems. "Kubla Khan," that beautiful and splendid though incomplete poem, was composed in a dream, quite literally. "Christabel," like "The Ancient Mariner," is a weird tale of "possession." Its haunting and elusive quality, its color and atmosphere, its pure witchery, are beyond all praise. "The Ancient Mariner" has been termed "the most sustained piece of imagery in the English language." Its affinity to the true ballad is quite obvious, but it transcends the best of the English ballads. Coleridge's primary motive has already been mentioned above in his own words. The artistry of the poem is extraordinary, in particular the spontaneous flow of words,—always the right words, delicate, varied, dreamy, appropriate, slightly archaic, chosen so unerringly for the beauty of the conception and the beauty of the vowel sounds. All seven of the sections of this ballad return to the theme,—the slaying of the bird of good omen and its consequences,—through the stages of penitence, expiation, and a measure of ultimate freedom. The crime is shown as a transgression of the fundamental law of love, which results in a fearful separation from human fellowship, a separation which in the nature of the case can never be wholly retrieved. There is a vein of tenderness and deep spirituality running through the poem. It was Coleridge's one complete and finished work, and it is a masterpiece.

William Wordsworth (1770–1850) lived a long life of meditation and communion with nature, which spanned in the maturity of its powers the entire period that we have under review. There is a certain appropriateness, perhaps, in considering him last, for he was a noble poet of noble resolve, and in his inspired moments he touches the very heights of English poetry.

The outward events of Wordsworth's life call for only the briefest mention—his education at Hawkshead and at Cambridge, his travels, his freedom from pecuniary worries through a fortunate legacy, his settling down to a life of the greatest simplicity in his native region of the English Lakes, and his death at Rydal Mount, April 23, 1850, after he had been for seven years poet laureate of England. With great fullness and particularity Wordsworth tells

us[1] of the inward events of these long years—of the spell that nature held over him even in his childhood, of the influence of books and men in his college days, of his republican sympathies (giving way to doubt and disillusionment in view of the later developments of the French Revolution), of his growing passion for the grand and inspiring aspects of nature and his growing belief that nature teaches man to feel and to think deeply, of his love for man as the lirect outcome of his love of nature, of his conceptions of art and poetry, and of his conviction that through poetry man will find his closest relationship with God.



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

In the consideration of the poetry of Wordsworth it must be admitted at the outset that it has very unequal value—the reader has many dull moments, realizing that the words and reflections are alike prosy and that the poetry is uninspired. The moral obtrudes itself too frequently. This much may be conceded. Yet our debt to Wordsworth is so profound that unfavorable criticism is trivial indeed. No poet is always at his best; and the poets who have left so rich a legacy as Wordsworth are very few. A volume of selections, like that prepared with such rare judgment by Matthew Arnold, gives us the essential Wordsworth—a wise poet who saw into the heart of things and who expressed himself with simple dignity and sincerity and beauty and understanding. These poems, as he himself said

[1] See especially "The Prelude."

truly, "will coöperate with the benign tendencies in human nature and society, and will, in their degree, be efficacious in making men wiser, better, and happier."

Wordsworth frequently laid down the principles of his poetic creed. The language suited to verse, he tells us, is "a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation." Referring to his contributions to "Lyrical Ballads" he says, "Low and rustic life was generally chosen because in that situation the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language." Thus in his ballads and shorter poems he used plain and common words deliberately, feeling that the poetic idea would make the words significant. He observed natural things with a deep and particular interest. The humble as well as the grand aspects of the natural world appealed to him. His thought was sometimes profound, but his power consists commonly in his depth of feeling and instinctive perception. His imaginative atmosphere is very different from that of Keats and Shelley, yet it is none the less real. At the basis of his philosophy is the belief in the intimate relationship of external nature with the spirit of God.

It is quite impossible, of course, to enumerate in this place more than a very few of Wordsworth's poems. "The Excursion" and "The Prelude," poems of considerable length, though not to be classed with his best, contain passages that are of great worth in estimating his theories of life and art. Among his narrative poems "Ruth," "The Brothers," and particularly "Michael" and "The Leech-Gatherer" reveal his singular power in depicting simple pathos, old age, poverty, endurance. The very titles of his lyrical poems bring back a flood of memory to every lover of Wordsworth: "She was a Phantom of Delight," "My Heart Leaps up," "She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways," "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud," and a host of others. Who is not inspired by such noble poems as the "Character of the Happy Warrior," the "Ode to Duty," or the "Ode on Intimations of Immortality"?

> "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
> The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,

Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home."

In his use of the sonnet Wordsworth was peculiarly happy, following by clear right in the succession of Shakespeare, Milton, and Keats. The sonnet commencing "The world is too much with us," the one composed upon Westminster Bridge, and that other composed upon the beach near Calais, "It is a beauteous evening, calm and free," are scarcely surpassed in our language. Among Wordsworth's reflective poems "Animal Tranquillity and Decay," "The Old Cumberland Beggar," and "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey" seem to stand out preëminent. Surely the last takes us into the secret places of the poet's life and thought:

"I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts: a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man."

Other names of consequence appear in the list of English Romantic poets: Southey, Landor (whose "Gebir" and "Hellenics," for example, are most attractive), and Sir Walter Scott, to speak of no others.

The Prose of Romanticism

The early nineteenth century is remembered for critics like Jeffrey and Christopher North and Lockhart; for the substantial prose of Southey and Landor, notably "The Life of Nelson" and "The Doctor" of the former and "Imaginary Conversations" of the latter; for a great deal that is excellent in the work of that erratic genius Leigh Hunt; for the lovable and informing diarist Henry

Crabb Robinson; and many another author and work. We must concern ourselves here, however, with the outstanding representatives of the novel and the essay.

Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832) stands incontestably as one of the chief of British novelists. His fame as a poet is much less secure, though his romantic narrative poems and lays are vividly written, move swiftly, and possess sustained interest. If "The Lady of the Lake" and "Marmion" are not highly imaginative, they carry with them a fine spirit of life and manliness and adventure.

Scott was born in Edinburgh and numbered among his ancestors a line of border chieftains. He was romantic by temperament, a voracious reader, a lover of history and ballad and legend. At twenty-one he was admitted to the bar, and for fourteen years he followed the legal profession, though not whole-heartedly. "Half-lawyer, half-sportsman" he described himself. At thirty-one he seemed to have found his vocation as a poet, and he enjoyed for years the greatest popularity in the field of the metrical romance. With the rise of Byron's star he had the good sense to see that he was outclassed, and at the age of forty-three he found his true place, as a writer of the historical romance. He had already established himself on his splendid estate at Abbotsford, and there he lived among his friends and retainers until his death. His last years witnessed his heroic struggle to pay off a huge indebtedness, contracted through no fault of his own.

Our narrative has already mentioned the early beginnings of the English novel. At the close of the eighteenth century the Radcliffian novel of suspense had a temporary popularity. Jane Austen (1775–1817) was the representative of the novel of manners which followed, and her "Pride and Prejudice," "Sense and Sensibility," and other tales have a sure audience to this day. The novel of suspense was more closely allied to the spirit of the age and led more naturally to the romances of Scott.

These romances number thirty-one, four of which are brief. Scott wrote the first group, of nine, including "Guy Mannering" and "The Heart of Midlothian," two of his finest novels, in a careful and leisurely fashion, laying their scenes in Scotland with occasional in-

cidents in England and treating of history comparatively close to his own day. The next group, of thirteen (1820–1825), showed more haste. Commencing with "Ivanhoe," Scott attempted in this group to present an earlier period, and he painted the romantic scenes of the Middle Ages with all the pageantry that appealed so strongly to his nature. England is generally the setting of these tales, and occasionally the period is as late as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. "Kenilworth," "The Fortunes of Nigel," "Redgauntlet," and "The Talisman" belong to this series. The last group of his novels (1826–1831), written under pressure and with declining physical vigor, are of less consequence.[1]

Scott in his novels depends more on the narrative than on character development or psychology. He has all the instincts of the popular historian—vividness, reality, definiteness of detail. Hazlitt says truly: "The manners, the personages, the events, the scenery, live over again in his volumes. Nothing is wanting, the illusion is complete." Scott is especially happy in his pictures of chivalry and feudalism and in his use of the supernatural. All his immense knowledge of the past was laid under tribute. His historical errors are inconsiderable in number. He had a natural open-mindedness and good humor. Soul struggles and dark villainies of character are not his common elements, nor does he have a fine understanding of people of all classes. He transports us to a world of romance, where there are action and color and movement and the clashing of swords.

Thomas de Quincey (1785–1859), one of the chief of English prose writers, lived a solitary, hermitlike life. For many years he had no settled habitation, but in 1808 became Wordsworth's neighbor at Grasmere. Here he lived, with interruptions, for thirty years, residing later at Edinburgh. He supported himself chiefly by magazine writing, but his literary production was greatly broken into by his addiction to the opium habit. De Quincey was the friend of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Lamb. He was shy, but a good talker, and he possessed a fund of humor, keen intellectual power, and insight. In his prose writing he sought partly to amuse, partly to im-

[1] See Professor Elton's very complete study in his "History of English Literature, 1780–1880," Vol. I.

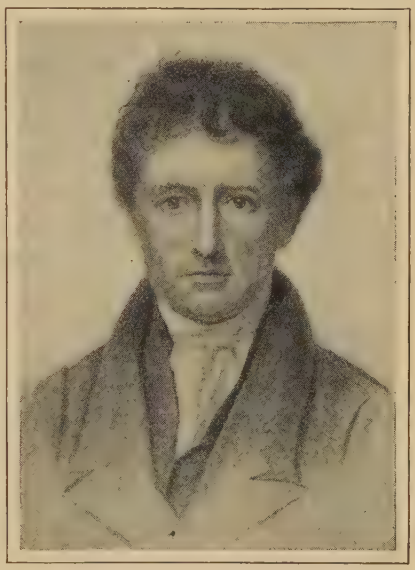
prove, but mostly to appeal to the artistic sense of his readers by means of rhythmical, impassioned, and gorgeous prose, full of word painting and with a melody almost equal to that of poetry.

De Quincey's chief work is a discursive autobiography, "The Confessions of an English Opium-Eater." To this should be added a number of choice and ornate essays on various themes. Though his sentences are frequently overelaborate and involved, a study of his prose style—abounding with exact similes and comparisons, elevated and even sublime ideas, and flashes of pathos and humor—is a rewarding experience.

Charles Lamb and his friends. The name of Charles Lamb (1775–1834) is one of the best beloved in English letters. A whole literature, and this of a most intimate sort, is now concerned with him and his friends. His entire life was spent in and about the city of London, which he loved passionately and celebrated eloquently. For thirty-three years he was clerk in the East India House; from this service he was pensioned in 1825. His sister, Mary Lamb, whose character was scarcely less lovable than his own, was his constant companion and charge. The circumstance that all her life she was subject to recurring periods of insanity, in one of which (1796) she took the life of her mother, gives a note of peculiar pathos to their joint experiences.

Lamb's early writings consisted of verse, fiction, drama, and essay. Not, however, until about 1807 did his real power disclose itself. Then the master appeared, and a new prose, a new criticism, and a subtle humor of the most exquisite kind began to grace English letters. The full flowering of his genius is seen in a slender body of essays, "The Essays of Elia." These began to appear in 1820, and the first series, of twenty-eight, were collected in 1823, followed by twenty-four "Last Essays of Elia," collected ten years later, just before his death. A few choice and intimate lyrics and sonnets; a few volumes of which his sister was part author; and a book of specimens of Elizabethan drama, with penetrating and original critical notes, should also be mentioned. Charles Lamb's legacy to us consists primarily, however, in his essays and in the collection of his personal letters made subsequent to his death.

If it chances that any reader of these pages has not yet come to know the gentle Elia, let us suggest the following essays for his introduction: "The Old Benchers," "Christ's Hospital," "My Relations," "Mackery End," and "The Superannuated Man" for their autobiographical elements; "A Chapter on Ears," "A Quakers' Meeting," and "The Old and the New Schoolmaster" for a good glimpse of Lamb's personal attractions and his antipathies; "Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist" and "A Dissertation upon Roast Pig" for his whimsical and delicate humor; and "New Year's Eve," "Old China," and "Dream Children" for their vein of subtle reminiscence and tender retrospect.



CHARLES LAMB

Lamb's style is full of grace and beauty, with a touch of antiquity in diction and vocabulary. His judgments are always his own. His loves included old books,[1] old customs, old dwellings, "old familiar faces," the sights of city streets, the memories of bygone days.

"Sun, and sky, and breeze, and solitary walks, and summer holidays, and the greenness of fields, and the delicious juices of meats and fishes, and society, and the cheerful glass, and candle-light, and fireside conversations, and innocent vanities, and jests, and *irony itself*—do these things go out with life?

"Can a ghost laugh, or shake his gaunt sides, when you are pleasant with him?

[1] "How natural it was to C. L." said Leigh Hunt, "to give a kiss to an old folio, as I once saw him do to Chapman's 'Homer.'"

"And you, my midnight darlings, my Folios! must I part with the intense delight of having you (huge armfuls) in my embraces? Must knowledge come to me, if it come at all, by some awkward experiment of intuition, and no longer by this familiar process of reading?

"Shall I enjoy friendships there, wanting the smiling indications which point me to them here,—the recognizable face—the 'sweet assurance of a look'?"

Lamb's friends included among many others Barry Cornwall and Talfourd, who have left us so delightful a picture of him; and Haydon the painter; and Coleridge and Hazlitt. Coleridge had a deep affection for Charles and Mary Lamb. "Dear to my heart, yea, as it were, *my heart*," he had said of them; and his visits to their home were not soon forgotten. For Coleridge was a great man. No such talker as Coleridge had been known in England since Johnson's day. His prose writings, the best of which are included in "Biographia Literaria," are incomplete, but they contain magnificent fragments of thought and criticism. The finest of his critical opinions centered in Shakespeare. William Hazlitt (1778–1830) will always be associated with Lamb's circle of friends. He is one of the best of English critics on literary subjects, on the drama, and on painting. Like Lamb he excels in the familiar essay. His style is easy and simple, interspersed with quotations. His essays "On Going a Journey," "On Reading Old Books," "On Living to One's Self," "On Persons One would Wish to have Seen," "On the Feeling of Immortality in Youth," are among the most delightful in our literature.

The Victorian Age

The years of Victoria's reign (1837–1901) conveniently mark the limits of this period. In the history of politics and democracy the era begins more exactly with 1832, the year of the Reform Bill. In literature poetry now became less significant than prose, and the prose constantly reflected the pressing problems of Victorian England. The scientific and philosophical impulse given by men like Darwin, Huxley, Mill, and Spencer also greatly influenced the thought of the age.

It has become in our day the fashion in some quarters to speak scornfully of Victorian literature as exhibiting hopelessly commonplace and middle-class ideas,—timidity, prudery, pretense, respectability, conventional religion,—all now as old-fashioned as Victorian furniture and the dresses of the queen herself. There is a measure of truth in this, but even a slight analysis will show that the age was preaching at and criticizing itself uninterruptedly, in the vigorous and pointed exhortations of such men as Carlyle, Ruskin, Thackeray, and William Morris; that it was keenly interested in social reform, as evidenced by novels like "Alton Locke" and "Nicholas Nickleby" and poems like Mrs. Browning's "The Cry of the Children"; and that in the fields of philosophy and religion its ideas, set forth by spokesmen who secured a national hearing, ranged all the way from ardent faith to frank rationalism. It was, in fact, a robust intellectual era, and its force is not yet spent.

Masters of Victorian Prose

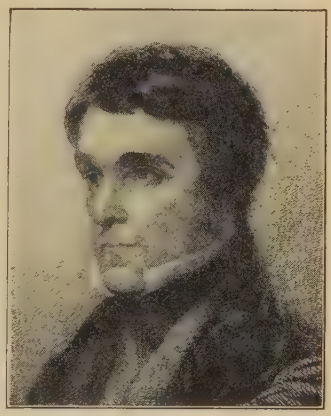
Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800–1859) is remembered as a man for his courage, honesty, frankness, optimism, and tolerance. He was a wide reader in many fields and possessed a prodigious memory and solid intellectual gifts. As a parliamentarian he had great rhetorical power. His writings exhibit honest workmanship and real substance, though they are somewhat deficient in reflection, imagination, and delicacy of perception. Macaulay's style was deliberately and carefully formed. It is energetic and oratorical, wonderfully clear, and enlivened by figures of speech and by its constant allusions. Macaulay has earned a substantial place in literature through the best of his literary and historical essays ("Milton," "Addison," "Clive," "Hastings," and a number of others), through his vigorous and sometimes brilliant "Lays of Ancient Rome," but most of all through his "History of England from the Accession of James II." It is in his quality as a historian that his reputation chiefly resides.

The historians of England during the century include other names of such distinction as Merivale, Grote, Milman, Freeman, Hallam, Green, Gardiner, Froude, Lecky, and Lord Acton.

Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881), son of a Scottish stonemason, was born at Ecclefechan in Dumfriesshire, received his education in the neighboring town of Annan and at Edinburgh University, became teacher and tutor for a short time, and then devoted himself to literature, living in Scotland until 1834 and thereafter in London, where his house in Cheyne Row, Chelsea, is now a Carlyle museum. The influences that shaped his life and thought were various: the rugged sincerity of his father and the loving devotion of his mother; the friendship during his youth of Edward Irving and during his manhood of Goethe and Emerson and many another; the natural trend of his studies—in the field of German literature at its greatest period, for example, and more especially in the attention he gave instinctively to men of power, like Dante, Cromwell, and Frederick the Great. He devoted himself to his studies with a sort of fierce energy of preoccupation that brooked no interference. After the death of his wife, Jane Welsh Carlyle, in 1866, he felt that he had perhaps been neglectful of her; but his love had really been honest and sincere and had suffered no break. His biographer Froude, with characteristic untrustworthiness, has given the world a false picture of the married life of these two famous people of genius.

Carlyle, the apostle of silence, was one of the most voluminous of authors. He wrote for almost a half-century, and the range as well as the mass of his writings is extraordinary. His earlier essays, contributed to the magazines, were mainly on literary subjects, showing in style and subject the influence of German thought. On the lonely farm of Craigenputtoch his most characteristic work, "Sartor Resartus," an amorphous spiritual biography, was slowly fashioned, and this (appearing first in periodical and then, in 1838, in book form) proclaimed him as a strikingly original force in literature. His early years in London were devoted to "The French Revolution," a historical work of a new order, all molten fire and energy, though, as it now appears, lacking in a thorough understanding of the basic idea of the Revolution. In 1837–1839 he gave three series of public lectures. "Heroes and Hero-Worship" (1841), the printed form of the last series, has always been a favorite and is certainly one of

the most quickening and suggestive of books. "Past and Present" (1843) displays Carlyle's native distaste for the injustices of the industrial system of his own generation and his fondness for the best things of the past. With the publication of his next book, "Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches," dates the newer and better understanding in England of the great Protector. Carlyle's labors for a number of years were bestowed upon the "History of Frederick the Great" (published in 1858–1865). It was his last important work, though the subsequent publication of his "Reminiscences" and several volumes of his letters, including his letters to Emerson, have added much to our understanding of him as a man and as a thinker.



THOMAS CARLYLE

While we must consider Carlyle as the chief figure in English letters in Victorian England and one of the greatest of English prose masters, this does not mean that his style is faultless. It has many mannerisms, irregularities, and repetitions. At its worst it is crabbed and strident. Carlyle had deep-seated prejudices (for example, he had no sympathy with the democratic tendencies of the day) and he vented his opinions in tirades of petulance and scolding. This much may be allowed; but much remains to be said. Carlyle has a marvelous command of words, a dramatic energy and intensity, a wealth of illustration. He has tenderness and humor, loftiness, originality, imagination, a blazing scorn for weakness and evil. Carlyle is also to this day a great moral force, because of his emphasis on spiritual values, on realities as over against appearances, on reverence and duty, the duty of work and obedience and sincerity and truth. "The Situation," says Carlyle, "that has not its Duty, its Ideal, was never yet occupied by man. Yes, here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein thou even

now standest, here or nowhere is thy Ideal: work it out therefrom; and working, believe, live, be free."

It is a great experience to follow Carlyle through the best of his essays, the splendidly dramatic passages in "The French Revolution," the lectures on heroes, the greater part of "Past and Present"; most of all, through "Sartor Resartus," with its universal quality and its analysis of the inner struggles of man's soul, rising from manifold despair and doubt to moral victory.

John Ruskin (1819–1900), like Carlyle a master of wonderfully eloquent prose and a prophet to his generation, was brought up in an atmosphere of culture and refinement and given every opportunity of travel in France, Switzerland, and Italy. He was nurtured on the English Bible, the vocabulary and melody and cadence of which he made the characteristic feature of his style. During his entire life he labored as a reformer of art and life. His native goodness and unselfishness, his devotion to the ideal of beauty and righteousness, and his profound sense of man's needs endear him to us, though the dogmatism of his teaching somewhat tempers our enthusiasm. Ruskin was a sensitive and reserved man who, with all his endowments and rich experiences, suffered greatly in spirit. His last years were spent in retirement at Brantwood, in the English Lake region.

Until 1860 his writings set forth his principles of art in those ever-memorable volumes "The Seven Lamps of Architecture" (1849) and "The Stones of Venice" (1851–1853) and in "Modern Painters," the first volume of which appeared in 1843 as a document to prove the superiority of Turner over other landscape artists, and which was continued in successive volumes (1846, 1856, 1860) as a general study of art. Two things stand out prominently in all of these works—Ruskin's deep sense of the relationship of art to ethics, and his surpassing power as a literary artist. The "seven lamps" are Sacrifice, Truth, Memory, Beauty, Power, Life, and Obedience. In his prose style Ruskin shows a genius for exposition, an ease and grace of manner, a splendor of idea, and a harmony and sense of rhythm almost unparalleled. He thus describes the peasants of the Valais in his chapter on "Mountain Gloom":

"They do not understand so much as the name of beauty, or of knowledge. They understand dimly that of virtue. Love, patience, hospitality, faith,—these things they know. To glean their meadows side by side, so happier; to bear the burden up the breathless mountain flank unmurmuringly; to bid the stranger drink from their vessel of milk; to see at the foot of their low death-beds a pale figure upon a cross, dying, also patiently;—in this they are different from the cattle and from the stones; but, in all this, unrewarded, so far as concerns this present life. For them, there is neither hope nor passion of spirit; for them, neither advance nor exultation. Black bread, rude roof, dark night, laborious day, weary arm at sunset; and life ebbs away."

JOHN RUSKIN

Ruskin's personal history may be gleaned from "Præterita" (1887–1888), a retrospective book of rare interest, and from "Fors Clavigera" (1871–1884), a series of letters to workingmen; his ideas on education and literature from "Sesame and Lilies" (1865); and his economic and social theories from "Unto This Last" (1862), "The Crown of Wild Olive" (1866), and other writings. In everything that he wrote he revealed the artist and the reformer, and his later years were almost wholly devoted to a continuous protest against the industrial evils of his day.

John Henry Newman (1801–1890), another delicate artist in English prose, was born in London, was appointed Fellow of Oriel

College, Oxford, in 1822, became the chief exponent of the so-called "Oxford Movement" toward High Church principles (1832–1841), joined the Church of Rome (1845), and became cardinal in 1879. His deeply religious nature stamps all his work. Intellectual, original, sweet and gentle, and at the same time zealous and argumentative, above all a strong spiritual force and a master of the English tongue, Newman will long be remembered. He captivates the attention of his readers as he did that of the audiences which he addressed. His style is simple and direct, sometimes satirical and humorous, and frequently impassioned and lofty to a degree. The "Apologia Pro Vita Sua," "The Idea of a University," and the verses and hymns of Newman give us, on the whole, our most vivid impression of him.

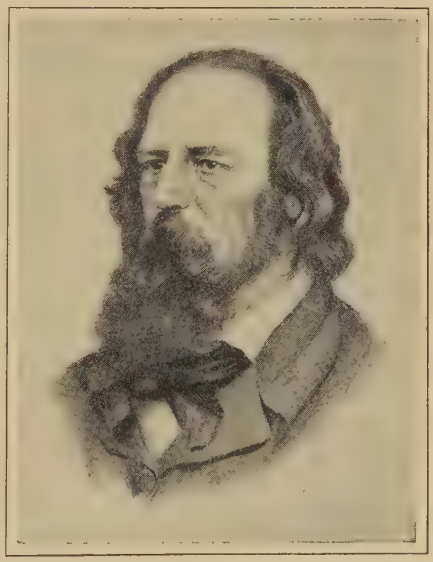
Matthew Arnold (1822–1888), the son of Thomas Arnold, the famous headmaster of Rugby, ranks as a critic with the best that England has known. His place as a poet is also a distinguished one. Few poets of his age produced poems of a finer lyric and narrative quality than Arnold's "The Scholar Gypsy," "Thyrsis," "The Future," "Dover Beach," "Sohrab and Rustum," and the sonnet on Shakespeare. In his criticism Arnold shows a splendid cosmopolitan taste—his work covers all departments and all periods of literature. His literary discernment is remarkable, and his judgments are generally sound, with occasional lapses in dealing with some of the men of the Romantic period and of his own generation. "The best which has been thought and said in the world" was what concerned him in his criticism. He made famous such expressions as "sweetness and light," "poetry is a criticism of life," "religion is morality touched with emotion," "God is a power not ourselves that makes for righteousness." Arnold had special affinity with Dante and with the Greeks, and his lectures "On Translating Homer" contain some of his choicest thoughts. None of his books is lacking in rich material, but the two volumes of "Essays in Criticism" are at the high-water mark. English culture is here seen at its deepest and finest.

We might well step a little further afield, for the Victorian Age was a time of unexampled production in English prose and we have

named only a few of the chief writers. In addition, Walter Pater, Edward Dowden, Walter Bagehot, R. H. Hutton, J. A. Symonds, Andrew Lang, Leslie Stephen, John Stuart Mill, Thomas Huxley, and others made substantial contributions to the volume of prose in the fields of criticism, biography, and science. The English prose fiction of the period is reserved for treatment a little later.

Victorian Poets

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–1892) was termed in his day "the poet" and enjoyed an almost unexampled popularity. He was one of twelve children of a Lincolnshire rector. His first poems were published before he entered Cambridge. The 1832 volume, containing "Œnone," "A Dream of Fair Women," and the first form of "The Lotos-Eaters" and "The Lady of Shalott," showed abundant power and melody. But his national fame was established through the publication in 1842 of his second important volume, with the immortal "Ulysses," the touching elegiac poem "Break, Break, Break," and "Morte d'Arthur"; through "The Princess: a Medley," the poetical tale published in 1847; and chiefly through that great and noble elegy "In Memoriam," which appeared in 1850, the year of his marriage and of his appointment to the laureateship. His later distinctive poems and popular successes—"Maud," "Enoch Arden,"



ALFRED TENNYSON

"Idylls of the King," and his stirring patriotic verses, like "The Defence of Lucknow," the "Ode on Wellington," and "The Charge of the Light Brigade"—were yet to appear. Tennyson's home after 1853 was at Farringford (Isle of Wight) and at Aldworth (Surrey). His poetic powers were unimpaired even in his later years; such poems as "Tiresias," "Demeter," and "Crossing the Bar" bear witness to this.

Tennyson's entire life was dedicated to the writing of poetry. Since the Elizabethan Age no one had brought into service so many poetic forms. Tennyson was clearly an artist and a master of technique. He not only belonged to the succession of the English poets who had gone before, but some of their forms he carried further and made still more beautiful. He essayed the ballad, the lyric, the narrative poem, the monodrama, the classic Greek theme, and in the "Idylls" made at least an approach to the epic. In exact rime, appropriate epithet, polished phrase, and melodious expression, he has few rivals. To his technical facility should be added his close observation of nature and life, his human sympathy, his sensitiveness to the thought currents of his age, his conviction that the world is governed by great natural and physical laws, and his religious faith and belief in immortality.

Tennyson popularized the Arthurian legends. The old Greek stories and ideals live again in some of his most characteristic lyrics. On the whole his choicest poem is "In Memoriam," the labor of seventeen years and the profoundest expression of his mind and heart.

It is not surprising that Tennyson, voicing as he did in easy and exquisite verse the concerns and perplexities and aspirations of the age in which he lived, should have achieved such unparalleled success. To us of the twentieth century, with our own problems and doubts, he makes inevitably a slighter appeal, and many of his poems remain unread. Tennyson is, however, a sure artist and a sweet singer, and the amount of his imperishable verse is unquestionably considerable. Let us recall a few of his most melodious lines:

"O, hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O, sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

"O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying."

Robert Browning (1812–1889) has a universal note generally absent from Tennyson's work—an intensity and vigor, a tonic quality, a robust cheerfulness, the optimism of a man who, though seeing all of life, still finds that it is good. Therefore to become acquainted with Browning is a rare and deeply satisfying experience, like meeting a man of power who has a thousand things to say that one wants to hear. Browning is related to our time quite as much as to his own, for his characters are as real to us as are persons of today. We see them, furthermore, in the great crises of their experience, and our contact with them gives pleasure of a kind deeper and more lasting than mere entertainment. The frequent obscurity of Browning's poems is rarely unintelligibility. Much rich thought is condensed in small space. A little effort to gather the sense of the lines is worth while when we have to do with a man who has so much to teach as Browning.

He was born in Camberwell, now a part of London. He grew up with a passion for music and painting and poetry and might conceivably have made himself famous in any of these fields. None of his earlier poems had a wide circulation; they were thought eccentric and difficult to understand. But when in 1846 Browning eloped with Elizabeth Barrett, one of the most able of English women writers and the author of many popular poems, the public suddenly took an interest in him. The almost ideal life of the Brownings in

Italy is one of the most interesting episodes in English literary history. These fifteen years were years of important production on the part of both these cultured and gifted people. After his wife's death Browning lived partly in England and partly in Italy, a well-known figure, rich in the best experiences of life, and using the great powers of his penetrating mind and insight in the elaboration of his long series of poems. The high point in his work was perhaps reached when "The Ring and the Book" was published, in 1868. By a singular chance his life closed on the very day (December 12, 1889) of the publication of his last poem, "Asolando," the epilogue of which gives his characteristic philosophy of life in its manliest and most inspiring form:

ROBERT BROWNING

"One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, tho' right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

"No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-time
Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be,
'Strive and thrive!' cry 'Speed,—fight on, fare ever
There as here!'"

Browning has produced a great gallery of portraits, and these with all their variety and wide range of interest, possess a unity that is very impressive. Life of a very complex character is shown; there is much diversity of time and place; yet the individual who appears on his canvas is caught at his moment of greatest interest to us, at the moment of his greatest emotional intensity,—more commonly at his time of probation, when the conflict of his soul is the paramount concern. Thus Browning's poetry is in large part "a poetry of situations," or psychological experiences, where the thought counts for everything. Pippa, the factory girl, unconsciously directs the chief persons of Asolo in the crises of their lives; Andrea del Sarto, the faultless painter, reveals the source of his weakness; the woman in the laboratory is transformed by jealousy into a thing of evil; David in his lusty youth comes into contact with the morbid king Saul; Karshish, the Arab physician, is moved strangely by a tale of simple faith in the Infinite; Abt Vogler discovers that his music opens to him a heavenly world; Rabbi Ben Ezra at the vantage point of the maturity of his powers discloses the meaning of the progress of the human spirit.

But it must not be supposed that Browning's work is simply and wholly a series of psychological studies. He is a true poetic artist, skillful in rimes and meters and diction, trying a great variety of poetic forms. Some of his finest verses are pure poems of action, others descriptive pieces; he frequently lets himself go in an impassioned lyric like

> "Nay, but you, who do not love her,
> Is she not pure gold, my mistress?"

or

> "There's a woman like a dewdrop, she's so purer than the purest."

Apart from the poems which have already been suggested, such poems as "Fra Lippo Lippi," "Cleon," "Caliban upon Setebos," "One Word More," "The Last Ride Together," and the poetic dramas, of which "A Blot in the 'Scutcheon" is a splendid example, command our admiration. All the excellences of Browning seem

to be summed up in his masterpiece, "The Ring and the Book," a splendid poetic work of over twenty-one thousand lines.

This poem unfolds an authentic murder story, the murder by Count Guido Franceschini of his wife Pompilia. Guido pretends that his was an act of justice in view of his wife's suspected adultery with a priest, Caponsacchi. The time of the poem is the interval between the arrest of Guido and his final sentence. There are twelve books, each concerned with the tale of the murder. Nine different persons in succession express their own individual impressions, beliefs, and judgments, according to their lights.

Browning in this great poem raises the dramatic monologue to its artistic height. His poetry is wonderfully sustained and beautiful. A rare understanding of human motives is displayed and an amazing moral and spiritual power. The gentle and pure Pompilia, the constant center of interest in the poem, is Browning's greatest creation in feminine characterization, worthy of a place among the most noble women in all imaginative literature.

Other Victorian poets. Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–1861) has already been mentioned. Her poetry includes several volumes, the earliest published in 1844 and the last published after her death. "Aurora Leigh," her verse novel, is well known, as are also her love lyrics, "Sonnets from the Portuguese," which show Mrs. Browning at her best.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–1882), poet and painter, a man of great gifts in both fields, brings to mind at once the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, a movement "to enforce and encourage the simplicity of nature." In the movement were associated a number of brilliant men—artists and authors. Ruskin's famous championship of the Brotherhood in his vigorous essay "Pre-Raphaelitism" did much to call public attention to it. Rossetti's poems are artistically conceived and elaborated. He has a sensuous feeling for beauty allied to that of Keats, and a power similar, though inferior, to that of Tennyson. A number of his verses were written to accompany his own pictures. One of his most exquisite poems, "The Blessed Damozel," was written in its first form when

Rossetti was only eighteen. He was happy in his use of the ballad form and of the sonnet. The sonnet sequence entitled "The House of Life" contains a number of individual sonnets of great beauty. "Jenny," "My Sister's Sleep," and "A Last Confession" are other important poems of Rossetti's. The last is a poignant tale in monologue form worthy of Browning.

Christina Rossetti (1830–1894), possessing poetic gifts almost as significant as those of her brother Dante Gabriel, wrote a few fanciful verse tales,—for example, "Goblin Market" and "A Prince's Progress,"—but most of her poems are short introspective and devotional lyrics. One of her choicest poems is given in part in the introduction to the present volume. She writes with great simplicity and delicacy. She is strongly attracted to solemn and soul-searching themes, as in the poems "Up-Hill" and "Song."

William Morris (1834–1896), associated with Rossetti and Burne-Jones in Pre-Raphaelite art, an artistic decorator, a printer of beautiful books, a poet, a social reformer, and a vigorous personality, has left his mark in many fields. Epic themes and situations of daring and adventure appealed to him, as shown in his poem "The Life and Death of Jason" and in his collection of tales in verse, "The Earthly Paradise." He has done much through his Viking tales and translations, particularly in the epic poem "Sigurd the Volsung," to quicken interest in the early saga literature of Norway and Iceland.

Algernon Charles Swinburne (1837–1909) was a prolific writer of poems, some of them miracles of beauty and many quite commonplace. He was an eccentric figure, given to ecstasies, devoted to Victor Hugo and to Mazzini and the freedom of Italy. His poems were dedicated to Rossetti, to Burne-Jones, to William Morris, and others. He loved the sound of waters, and he sang rapturously of the sea. The old Greek themes had a fascination for him. His hates were as marked as his enthusiasms; he was rebelliously unorthodox, and he enjoyed shocking Victorian respectability. Swinburne was an apt inventor of metrical forms. "Songs before Sunrise," "Tristram of Lyonesse," and his poems in Greek drama form are especially esteemed. The music of many of his

verses, especially his choruses, is extraordinary, as in the chorus from "Atlanta in Calydon" commencing with the enchanting lines:

"Before the beginning of years,
  There came to the making of man
Time, with a gift of tears;
  Grief, with a glass that ran;
Pleasure, with pain for leaven;
  Summer, with flowers that fall;
Remembrance fallen from heaven,
  And madness risen from hell;
Strength without hands to smite;
  Love that endures for a breath;
Night, the shadow of light,
  And life, the shadow of death."

Our list of Victorian poets is not complete, for James Thomson, Arthur Hugh Clough, Oscar Wilde, Coventry Patmore, Francis Thompson (the author of that remarkable poem "The Hound of Heaven"), and others belong to the number. Edward Fitzgerald's chief work, his translation of the "Rubaiyat," has already been referred to in these pages, and the poems of Stevenson, Meredith, and Hardy will call for a word a little later.

The Earlier Victorian Novelists

Charles Dickens (1812–1870), who properly ushers in for us the brilliant succession of Victorian novelists, rose to fame when "Pickwick Papers" appeared in monthly numbers in 1836–1837. He had had a boyhood and youth of hardship, followed by invaluable experience as a reporter, in which capacity his very wonderful powers of observation and his faculty of rapid, incisive writing were developed. His first book, "Sketches by Boz," made only a slight appeal, but the readers of "Pickwick" increased in number as that work progressed, until Dickens, then only twenty-four years old, had a national hearing. "Oliver Twist" followed the next year, and thereafter (we name only Dickens's chief successes) "Nicholas Nickleby," "The Old Curiosity Shop," "Martin Chuzzlewit," "Dombey and

Son," "David Copperfield," "Bleak House," "A Tale of Two Cities," "Great Expectations," "Our Mutual Friend," and in 1870, the year of Dickens's death, the unfinished "Edwin Drood."

If our primary interest in Dickens is to find pleasure in his humor, "Pickwick" is his masterpiece. The construction is loose; the tale is one of pure enjoyment; and the situations (new in each chapter), the characters, the descriptions, the waggery, all have the flavor of Dickens at its rarest. Who has not made the acquaintance of Mr. Pickwick, of Mr. Jingle, of Mrs. Bardell, and of the two memorable Wellers!

But the succeeding books, each possessing some of the qualities that are so admirable in "Pickwick," have also virtues of their own. The series of portraits continues, and we are introduced not only to figures that live in our memory, like Mark Tapley, Mrs. Gamp, Silas Wegg, Mr. Squeers, Fagin, and Peggotty, but to others that serve as the most universal of types—Mr. Micawber, Mrs. Jellyby, old Scrooge, Mr. Pecksniff, Uriah Heep. The British capital is pictured with such minuteness that the London of Dickens's day lives unchanged as the London of our imagination. Other settings are no less vividly pictured. The incidents of the novels have an astonishing variety and a no less astonishing similarity.

Dickens is more readable than many a writer of more finished novels. The number of persons who have read the complete series of his novels and who have reread repeatedly their favorites, must be legion. Dickens's audience is not ordinarily critical, though his readers may clearly recognize the occasional slovenliness, sentimentality, fantastic caricatures, extravagance, and poor taste that appear in his novels. What they admire is Dickens's skill in telling a story and in painting portraits, his frolicsome humor and genuine kindliness and goodness of heart, and his readiness to smite intrenched evil in the hope of leaving a better world than he had found.

William Makepeace Thackeray (1811–1863) wrote in an easy, graceful, almost flawless style, revealing always the cultured gentleman that he was. In the best sense he may be described as a man of sentiment. His satiric manner was used deliberately for a worthy end. Thackeray all his life possessed boyish enthusiasms and one

of the most captivating of personalities. He was born in India and was brought as a small boy to England, where in due time he went to the Charterhouse School and to Trinity College, Cambridge. He showed a fondness for drawing, especially caricature, and a bent toward writing. At Weimar, where he spent a year, he met Schiller and Goethe; a little later he made his home temporarily in Paris, to which city he returned repeatedly in his later years. Most of his life, however, was spent in England. Journalism, illustrating, magazine-writing, and descriptions of his travels occupied the early years of his manhood. He wrote under assumed names at first and seemed to have a special fondness for one of these, "Michael Angelo Titmarsh." Like Dickens he gave public lectures in England and America. Thackeray's essays and papers on various subjects are of a piece, as to style and interest and delicate humor, with his novels. He was a "clubbable" man, a rare friend, an engaging letter-writer. We look upon the familiar portrait, with the strong, kindly, bespectacled face, feeling the same emotions as if we were looking at a personal friend.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

"Vanity Fair" (1847–1848), "Pendennis" (1850), "Henry Esmond" (1852), and the "Newcomes" (1855) are Thackeray's finest novels. Let us glance briefly at the first and third of these. In the former Thackeray presents a masterpiece, a society novel of the early nineteenth century. It is developed carefully. The whole

action centers in Becky Sharp, one of the immortal figures of literature, dazzling, unscrupulous, resourceful. The novel is "without a hero," but unforgetable figures in addition to Becky are not lacking—Rawdon Crawley, Amelia Sedley, the Osbornes, and Lord Steyne. Thackeray describes brilliantly the fashionable life of the period and displays a keen insight into human motives and human foibles. Pathos and satiric wit are curiously intermingled. There are great individual scenes, as in all of Thackeray's novels. James T. Fields says:

"A friend once congratulated Thackeray on that touch in which Becky 'admires' her husband when he is giving Lord Steyne the punishment which ruins *her* for life. 'Well,' he said, 'when I wrote that sentence, I slapped my fist on the table, and said, "*That* is a touch of genius."'"

"Henry Esmond" deals with the time of Queen Anne and the subsequent period and shows Thackeray's wonderfully complete knowledge of the social and literary history of those times. Its slightly archaic vocabulary is never overdone or wearisome; it gives just the necessary atmosphere to serve for complete reality. Again the chief figure is a woman—the beautiful and irresistible Beatrix Esmond. None but a very great writer could delineate such a character. We see her again, in the decline of her fortunes, in "The Virginians," the sequel to "Henry Esmond."

It is not too much to say that "Vanity Fair" and "Henry Esmond" are the two English novels that it is indispensable for everyone to read who cares for the fine things in literature.

"George Eliot" (Mary Ann Evans) (1819–1880) reached her great period in the decade from 1860 to 1870 and a little later. Her fame has since become considerably dimmed. The reason seems to lie in the fact that her novels, with all their strength and superior craftsmanship, convey to the reader the author's feeling of gloom and lack of buoyancy, and more especially in the fact that the psychological novel, though new in her own day, has become an old story to us. In some directions George Eliot's work, even in her own special field, has now been excelled. It would be a great mistake to make too much of these matters, for George Eliot was a writer of

solid attainments, of very keen powers of observation (particularly of the persons and scenes in her own native Warwickshire), of profound personal experience, and of wide reading and culture. This must be evident to every reader of her novels. Her earlier period—the period of "Adam Bede" (1859), "The Mill on the Floss" (1860), with its important and attractive autobiographical element, and "Silas Marner" (1861)—is on the whole her best, though "Romola" and "Middlemarch," belonging to the later group, are almost if not quite up to her highest level of excellence. Generations of readers will continue to follow sympathetically and with profit the fortunes of such figures as Silas Marner, Maggie Tulliver, and Hetty Sorrel, for the ethical problems and the character studies of George Eliot's novels are of perennial interest. "My books," she said, "are deeply serious things to me and come out of all the painful discipline and most hardly learned lessons of my life."

Other mid-Victorian novelists. The remarkable fecundity of the novel in Victorian days is a well-known phenomenon. "Jane Eyre," "Shirley," and "Villette," by Charlotte Brontë (1816–1855); "Alton Locke," "Hypatia," and "Westward Ho," by Charles Kingsley (1819–1875); "The Last Days of Pompeii" and other no less important novels by Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton (1803–1873); the Barchester novels of Anthony Trollope (1815–1882), with their many extraordinary excellences and the creation of real characters like Mrs. Proudie and the Warden; "Lavengro" and "Romany Rye," the productions of that eccentric genius George Borrow (1803–1881),—all these are certainly worthy of note. Nor have we mentioned Disraeli, Charles Reade, Captain Marryat, Wilkie Collins, Mrs. Gaskell, Blackmore, Watts-Dunton, and others hardly less important.

Late Victorian Novelists

The fiction of the latter part of the century is also associated with a number of names honored in English literature. In passing we mention Samuel Butler (1835–1902), artist, musician, and writer, whose "Way of All Flesh" and "Erewhon" have so many

admirers; and George Gissing (1859–1903), critic and novelist, whose autobiographical writings "By the Ionian Sea" and "The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft" will conceivably have enthusiastic readers a century hence, so perfect are they in style and workmanship.

Three authors call for more extended treatment.

George Meredith (1828–1909) seems to be a near contemporary, though "The Ordeal of Richard Feverel," in many respects the foremost of his novels, appeared as long ago as 1859. He suggests in his studied, condensed, and frequently obscure style his American contemporary Henry James. Subtle and cryptic wit, profound character study, psychological realism of the kind made familiar to us in George Eliot, are characteristics of George Meredith's novels. His reputation is very high among the more thoughtful and discriminating readers of our day. Surely "Richard Feverel," "The Adventures of Harry Richmond," "The Egoist," and "Diana of the Crossways" may be classed with the finest novels in our language. Every page is packed with thought. To one familiar with Meredith's style the difficulties of expression tend to disappear, and the satisfaction which comes through contact with artistic work of the first order correspondingly increases. There are many famous passages in his novels; as, for example, the meeting of Richard Feverel and Lucy Desborough, one of the most idyllic and captivating of love scenes.

Meredith's poems are admired for somewhat the same reasons as his novels, and they possess the same qualities. "Love in the Valley" is a characteristic poem. The beauty of nature is eloquently extolled in the best of Meredith's work.

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894), a latter-day Romanticist, has written the best of the recent personal letters, familiar essays, and poems for children; the best of boys' stories; and, in "Will o' the Mill" and "A Lodging for the Night," two of the best of English short stories. Furthermore, the man is better than his work, sure as that always is in its craftsmanship; for the well-beloved name of Robert Louis Stevenson signifies to all of us an unfaltering and undefeated spirit, fighting against overwhelming odds. It is

not necessary to rehearse in this place the incidents in Stevenson's personal history. The most characteristic element in his nature was his love for youth and daring and adventure. His work, in consequence, generally shows the impulse of the Romanticist, as is evident in "Treasure Island," "Kidnapped," "The Master of Ballantrae," and "David Balfour," to say nothing of the glimpses afforded by his essays and by the narratives of his travels, by the childlike pictures of his boyhood in "A Child's Garden of Verses," and by his more mature reflections in "Underwoods." Americans will always remember Robert Louis Stevenson's brief experiences in our country and will make his American places of residence goals of friendly pilgrimage.

Thomas Hardy (1840–1928) is incomparably the greatest of recent English novelists. Apart from his novels he has written a considerable number of poems, and a dramatic work of vast scope, "The Dynasts," in verse and prose, with nineteen acts and one hundred and thirty scenes. His verse has the same rugged character, the same sense of destiny, and the same saturnine aspect as his novels. The latter number fourteen, and in addition there are four volumes of stories, the setting being, with few exceptions, one restricted geographical location—"Wessex," in south-central England, which appears as a primitive region where nature shows a stern and frequently malignant face. Hardy's moods in his strongest novels are not lightsome or joyous, and the background which he has chosen for his tales lends itself to his purpose marvelously. On his small stage some of the great tragedies of life are enacted. The elementary truths of life are presented in somber guise, man being bound up with his environment and left helplessly in the hands of a fate stronger than himself.

Hardy's conspicuous successes are four: "Far from the Madding Crowd" (1874), "The Return of the Native" (1878), "The Mayor of Casterbridge" (1886), and "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" (1891). To this list should perhaps be added "Jude the Obscure" (1895), though its extreme Naturalism after the Zola type and the sordid experiences of its chief characters place it a little below the highest level of his work. There can be no question that Hardy is a great

literary artist. His style is simple, straightforward, and clear. His descriptive powers are most remarkable, especially in his nature pictures and in his pen portraits of his chief characters. Note, for instance, the description of Egdon heath and of Eustacia Vye in "The Return of the Native." His plots are well-nigh perfect. This remark applies not only to his novels as a whole but to the working-out of individual incidents. A good example is the chapter "All Saints and All Souls" in "Far from the Madding Crowd." Hardy is fortunate in his humorous passages; his humor is genuine, though it has an ironic tinge.

If we were to suggest one book displaying all the excellences of Hardy, it would be "The Return of the Native"—clearly one of the masterpieces of fiction of the last generation.

The Twentieth Century

Books of our own day pass in endless procession. Time has not yet thinned their ranks. We follow our tastes and read what we will; our judgments are largely matters of individual opinion and are subject to continuous modification. Yet it may be useful, in closing this chapter on English literature, to speak of some of the currents of thought of the twentieth century and a few of the writers who, for one reason or another, have won public esteem.

The English novel continues in its place of preëminence over other types of writing. We hear a great deal about the novel of ideas. One of its chief exponents was said by Henry James in a famous essay to "turn out his mind and its contents upon us by any free familiar gesture and as from a window forever open." The contemporary English novel, though sometimes quite undisciplined in form, shows, perhaps more frequently, remarkable technical skill. Many novels are clearly propagandist documents, written to prove some theory and exhibiting the well-recognized tendency of the day in the direction of extreme liberalism. Coupled with this is a disregard of the conventionalities, extravagant at times, but wholesome and refreshing as an offset to the smugness and respectability of the immediate past. The present is not a time of reticence, it

appears; but in the attempt to discover "the real facts of life" many writers of the day go to absurd lengths. For instance, the vogue of a number of novelists is secured largely because of their boldness in describing the pathology of sex. Sociological novels are still common, for our generation is exercised by many pressing social problems. Ordinarily the treatment of religion in the novel and in other types of literature is an uncommon motive, and when Mr. Chesterton or Mr. Wells or Mr. Shaw, each in his way, enters the field, his mood is generally apologetic, never fervid. A. C. Benson's religious studies are clearly a survival.

A more definite reference to the fiction of this century shows its very complex character—it cannot be hedged in by any brief mention of the current tendencies. At the beginning of the century Rudyard Kipling's popularity was at its highest point. He has glorified the achievements of the age in material and scientific progress and in empire-building; he has made India amazingly clear to us, especially in "Kim," his masterpiece; and he has written some of the best short stories in our language. William De Morgan produced in 1906, at the age of sixty-four, his first novel, "Joseph Vance," and followed this by five others, all written after the fashion of an earlier time rather than of our own period. Maurice Hewlett's varied work, of which the historical novels "Richard Yea-and-Nay" and "The Queen's Quair" may be given the chief place, shows the care of a real artist. Arnold Bennett, in his provincial studies, the "Five Towns" novels, ushered in by "The Old Wives' Tale" in 1908, has produced remarkable books which are certainly destined to survive. Joseph Conrad, a man of Polish origin, a sailor of the seas, and a writer only in his later years, may well prove to be one of the chief English novelists of our generation. His is a sincere and attractive personality, and there is in his work a permanent and universal quality. "The Nigger of the Narcissus," "Lord Jim," "Nostromo," and indeed all of Conrad's novels have a host of admirers. John Galsworthy, who is, as yet, more conspicuous in his dramatic writings, is growing in power as a novelist. Hugh Walpole, Eden Phillpotts, W. L. George, Gilbert Cannan, W. B. Maxwell, D. H. Lawrence, Compton Mackenzie, and other novelists

have a considerable following. H. G. Wells must be accorded a prominent place, for he is a phenomenon of our era. Since 1895 he has written constantly, and his renown has grown. Romances; essays of a sociological and religious character; a series of novels, of which "Mr. Britling Sees it Through" and others have had an astonishing circulation; and "The Outline of History," a brilliant performance out of his natural field, which has served to a surprising extent to make historical reading popular,—all these are to his credit. They are all written in a hurried, journalistic style, as if the author possessed a rage for production that could not be appeased.

In the field of criticism England has continued to make substantial contributions to the work of the past, as evidenced by the writings of George Saintsbury, Edmund Gosse, William Archer, Arthur Symons, Sidney Colvin, and others.

The drama, after a long period of comparative inaction, has come to its own again in England as on the Continent. While the Romantic tradition has been preserved in the verse dramas of Stephen Phillips, of which "Paolo and Francesca" is so choice an example, and while the Irish drama[1] of our day has a characteristic poetic quality, the plays by English writers of the past two decades are nearly all in prose, following in the wake of the sociological and problem plays of Ibsen, which they so frequently resemble. Sir Arthur Wing Pinero, Henry Arthur Jones, and Arnold Bennett are well-known playwrights. Sir James Barrie's plays, with their very original flavor and charm, are extremely popular. John Drinkwater, in his thoughtful study "Abraham Lincoln," has proved of special interest to Americans. John Galsworthy's somber and powerful "The Silver Box," "Justice," and other plays exhibit his deep sense of social inequality and wrong. George Bernard Shaw, however, overtops the other English dramatists of his day. No one can doubt his wit, his brilliance, and his versatility,—nor his manifold eccentricities of manner and ideas. His prose prefaces, frequently of unconscionable length, set forth some of his favorite theories. Shaw's most representative plays are apparently intended as tracts for the times, to overturn commonly accepted ideas and conventions. His

[1] See the chapter on Irish literature.

purpose is probably sincere enough, though he takes delight in exasperating people, and one always suspects that he is standing in the wings and winking at his audience. Playgoers of our day have vivid recollections of "Arms and the Man," "Cæsar and Cleopatra," "Man and Superman," "Fanny's First Play," "Androcles and the Lion," and "Pygmalion." Shaw has also an extremely large reading public, especially in America.

In some respects the poetry of our era is its richest literary product. It has many phases. One of these, "free verse," will be treated in the chapter on American literature. Only a few of the recent English poets can be mentioned in our narrow limits. At the beginning of the century Kipling's poems had an enormous popularity; and some of them, especially the dialect verses and the noble "Recessional," have taken a permanent place in our literature. The poems of Stephen Phillips and of Arthur Symons are remarkable for their sensuous beauty; and A. E. Housman's collection of verses, "A Shropshire Lad," for its extraordinary simplicity.

"When I was one-and-twenty
I heard a wise man say,
'Give crowns and pounds and guineas
But not your heart away;
Give pearls away and rubies
But keep your fancy free.'
But I was one-and-twenty,
No use to talk to me."

Among the newer poets Wilfrid W. Gibson, Siegfried Sassoon, William H. Davies, Ralph Hodgson, Lascelles Abercrombie, and Walter de la Mare should certainly be mentioned. Alfred Noyes has produced a great body of verse of varied character,—delicate, beautiful, whimsical, sometimes stirring in its appeal. "The Highwayman," "The Barrel Organ," "A Song of England," "The Tramp Transfigured," and others of his poems are deservedly popular. John Masefield is now generally regarded as one of the most gifted of recent English poets. A number of his lyrics have a captivating beauty. The sea is his element; when this is his theme he is always fortunate.

"A wind's in the heart of me, a fire's in my heels,
I am tired of brick and stone and rumbling wagon-wheels;
I hunger for the sea's edge, the limits of the land,
Where the wild old Atlantic is shouting on the sand."

Last of all, we mention Rupert Brooke, one of the young men of promise who laid down their lives during the World War. Brooke had written praiseworthy poems earlier, but nothing to equal the little group of prophetic sonnets produced in service. That beginning "Now, God be thanked Who has matched us with His hour," and that other, "Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!" positively electrify the reader; they take their place with the best lyric poetry of our era.

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Athenæum Press Series contains valuable volumes, with critical notes, of selections from Keats, Shelley, De Quincey, Landor, Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Carlyle. Ginn and Company.

Everyman's Library contains many nineteenth-century classics (send to E. P. Dutton & Company for list). Other useful series: Bohn (Harcourt, Brace and Company); Temple Classics (E. P. Dutton & Company); Golden Treasury (The Macmillan Company).

School classics: Standard English Classics (Ginn and Company). Similar series on other publishers' lists.

The publishers of standard editions of the works of the authors named in this chapter can be readily located.

Suggested Topics

Romanticism and Classicism—a comparison.

The lyrics of Keats and Shelley.

A study of Wordsworth's ode on "Intimations of Immortality."

Wordsworth's attitude toward nature.

Scott's typical themes and his historical method.

The personality of Charles Lamb, as shown in his essays.

The Victorians and ourselves—contrasts.

Macaulay's prose style.

A study of Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus."

Ruskin's attitude toward economic questions, as shown in "The Crown of Wild Olive."

The choicest lyrics of Tennyson.

Tennyson's use of the "Morte d'Arthur."

Browning's philosophy of life.

A study of Browning's "Men and Women."

Dickens's humor, as displayed in "Pickwick Papers."

A character study of Becky Sharp.

The personality of Robert Louis Stevenson.

Striking passages from Meredith.

An analysis of Hardy's "Return of the Native."

Recent English poets.

A study of a recent English novel.

CHAPTER XIV

IRISH LITERATURE

Tradition and Early History

Pre-Christian Ireland. The Irish are a Celtic people. The evidence seems to point to a twofold Celtic migration from the Continent to the British Isles, first by the Gaelic and later by the Britannic branch. The latter displaced the Gaels and crowded them into Ireland and the Scottish Highlands. So far as actual events are concerned, we have practically nothing that is authentic until close upon the Christianization of the island. There are traditions of shadowy ancestral races and conflicts—of the monstrous Firbolgs and the fierce Fomorians, overcome by the half supernatural race of the Tuatha Dé Danann, who are said to have come from Greece; of the four Milesian princes from Spain, who overcame the Tuatha and established the high kingship in Ireland; of the long line of kings that followed; of King Conchobhar[1] and the hero Cuchulain,[2] and of King Cormac mac Art and the two chieftains Finn and Ossian. With Cormac we begin to see the dawn of authentic history. He is supposed to have reigned about the middle of the third century of the Christian Era.

The pagan pantheon of Ireland seems to have consisted of a number of divinities corresponding in a rough way to some of the gods of Greece. By the time of Cormac these were apparently reduced to a single great being, symbolized by the sun, and to the numerous and varied forms of the sidhe,[3] or fairy folk. The Druids acted as priests, prophets, teachers, and poets. The social system was apparently a crude sort of communism. The people were divided into tribes and families, owning allegiance to their local kings and in a loose way to the high king. They lived in houses of wood

[1] Cŏn′o-här, or Conor. [2] Cū-hū′lăn. [3] Shē.

or wattles, indulged in cattle raids, were judged by their Brehons and their system of Brehon law, and accorded a high measure of honor to their women. They had a written language, and were not without a certain skill in the arts, as their metal work and the great palace at Tara bear witness. Poetry was cultivated by the bardic schools, and it may be that the so-called "Song of Amergin," a sixteen-line fragment beginning, "I am the wind that breathes upon the sea," has come down to us from the pre-Christian period. Some of the institutions of the pagan era, such as the Brehon law and the bardic schools of poetry, together with much of the pagan temperament and reaction to experience, survived far into Christian times.

The missionaries. The literature of Ireland in the early period is bound up intimately with the work of the missionaries and great religious teachers. Saint Patrick is said to have seen Ireland first when taken there in his boyhood as a captive from Britain. He was sent from Rome in later years to carry out his long-cherished ambition of Christianizing the Irish people. The dates traditionally assigned to his labors in Ireland are 432–492. He seems to have gone about with a considerable following of helpers preaching the gospel and founding churches and schools, and to have been everywhere gladly received. He established the famous school at Armagh. Under his successors, particularly Saint Columcille, Ireland was by the end of the sixth century almost wholly Christianized, and was dotted with schools and colleges like that at Armagh, in which religious and secular learning was cultivated. To these centers of learning came students from all parts of Europe, and from them missionaries and scholars went forth to England and the Continent —as far as Switzerland and Galicia. And it was in these schools that the priceless manuscripts of early Irish literature were collected, copied, and preserved.

Poems and other writings have been attributed to Saint Patrick and Saint Columcille, and it is possible that a few fragments actually composed by them may have survived, such as "The Deer's Cry," a short devotional poem assigned to Saint Patrick, and the "Farewell to Ireland," said to have been written by Saint Columcille.

The Irish language. The Irish language is a branch of the Celtic —the Goidelic, or Gaelic, branch. The earliest manuscripts and inscriptions exhibit two forms, the Roman and the Ogham. Ogham seems to have been employed only for inscriptions on stone or metal and to have made use of a runelike alphabet based phonetically on the Roman. The Irish script used in manuscripts is a remarkably beautiful modification of the Roman alphabet. The period of the language known as Old Irish extends to the end of the tenth century. It appears almost wholly in notations on various continental manuscripts; there are also a very few poetic fragments, certain copies of the Gospels, and one or two other specimens. Some of these ancient manuscripts, particularly those of the Gospels, are typical of the highly developed art of illumination, so characteristic of the Irish copyists. Middle Irish extends from the eleventh to the seventeenth century, and Modern Irish from the seventeenth century to the present.

A PORTION OF THE GENEALOGY OF JESUS CHRIST

From the "Book of Kells"

The Irish genius. So far as the nature and peculiar qualities of the Irish people are concerned, they may be fairly well summed up in the statement that the Irish are of Celtic stock. This means that they are builders of poems rather than of empires. Fundamentally their instinct is for beauty and romance and not for prosperity.

They are generous to the point of improvidence; and a people of whom this is true cannot be cold or heartless. The entirely lovable Goldsmith is typical of his countrymen. The fondness of the Irish people for nature is probably deeper and more consistent than that of any other people in the world. There is no moment in their literature in which this sentiment is not warm and sincere. Moreover, in no other people is the feeling for the supernatural so intense. This is also a part of their Gaelic heritage. There is a strange mingling of the old paganism and the new Christianity in much of their best literature and in many of their everyday beliefs and customs. They have refused to turn the old gods out of doors. They keep them in that charming world of the fairies,—the "good people,"—who constitute so vital a link between the visible and the invisible universe. Elves, banshees, leprechauns, haunted raths and streams and caves and shores, are everywhere in Ireland, today as in the distant past. "We exchange civilities with the world beyond," says Yeats. And again he speaks, in his analysis of the Irish spirit, of "the ancient worship of nature, and that troubled ecstasy before her, that certainty of all beautiful places being haunted," which a real reverence for nature brings with it. This is true of the whole course of Irish endeavor and experience. In the ancient records we find:

"One day the young poet Nede fared forth till he stood on the margin of the sea, for the poets believed the brink of the water to be the place of poetic inspiration. He heard a sound in the wave, even a chant of wailing and sadness, and he marveled thereat."[1]

And writing but yesterday by comparison, Synge truly enough makes Ireland the "playboy of the western world," representing it as clinging obstinately to romance in the face of much ridicule and at the sacrifice of much advancement in practical and worldly things.

The Saga-Romance Cycles

Date. The real greatness of early Irish literature lies in the splendid mass of heroic and legendary tales known as saga-romance, dealing with the events and characters of the pre-Christian age. It

[1] "Book of Leinster."

is difficult to determine the date of this literature. We have no manuscripts antedating the eleventh century. But it is practically certain that many of these are transcriptions of earlier copies going back as far as the eighth and even the seventh century. Moreover, most of the tales were doubtless set down from versions that had been transmitted orally for several centuries earlier. It is possible, therefore, that we may date the original composition of some of this material in pre-Christian times. The authorship of it is quite unknown. There is extant enough of it to fill several thousand pages, and this is only a small fraction of the original quantity. The rest has perished.

The Mythological cycle. The saga-romance material falls into three great cycles—the Mythological, the Red Branch, and the Fenian cycle. The stories in the Mythological cycle are relatively few in number. They deal with the vast, remote, shadowy conflicts of the pagan gods. The most important sagas in this cycle are those of the first and the second "Battle of Moytura," of the "Children of Tuireann," and of the "Children of Lir." The substance of the tales is more or less confused, the characters are gigantic, and the characterization is formless and grotesque.

The Red Branch cycle is known also as the heroic cycle, as the Ultonian or Ulster cycle, and as the Cuchulain cycle. The events which it chronicles are assumed to have taken place about the beginning of the Christian Era. It is by far the finest of the three cycles. The characterization is much more definite, and the events are more orderly and better connected than in the Mythological cycle. In form the romances in all three cycles are mingled prose and verse. They doubtless consisted originally of detached or loosely connected poems, the gaps between which were in later times filled in with prose.

Cuchulain is so great a figure in ancient Irish literature that a brief survey of his adventures and exploits will be in place.

We have first a series of separate tales about him. One of these tells of his mysterious birth and parentage (like those of Arthur); another tells of his wooing of Emer; another of his rearing, including his journey to Alba (Scotland) to the palace of the wise woman Scathach,

whose daughter Uathach falls in love with him; another of the woman warrior Aoife,[1] whom Cuchulain overcomes and forces to marry him, reminding us of the Brynhild story; another of their son Conlaoch, who is slain by his father Cuchulain, being recognized only at the moment of his death—strikingly similar to the stories of Sohrab and Rustum and of Hildebrand. The second group of tales forms part of the loosely connected series known as the "Táin Bo Cualnge"[2] ("Cattle Raid of Cooley"). These tales recount the raising of a vast army by Queen Mève and King Oilioll of Connacht; the day-by-day single combats between Cuchulain and the warriors of Connacht; the final unwilling combat between Cuchulain and his friend Ferdiad, whom Queen Mève has inveigled into the enterprise and who, after a three days' struggle, is slain by Cuchulain; and the great battle on the plains of Meath, in which Mève and Oilioll are defeated. The third group of tales centers in the death of Cuchulain. Queen Mève, his vindictive enemy, makes use of the witchcraft of the three daughters of Calatin. One of the witches, assuming the form and voice of Niamh,[3] the sweetheart of Cuchulain, lures him to the field, where, after many exploits of valor, he is slain by Lewy. Conal Cearnach, his friend, afterward avenges him and brings his head, together with those of his enemies, to his wife, Emer, at Emania, who utters her lament: "'Love of my soul, O friend, O gentle sweetheart, and O thou one choice of the men of the earth, many is the woman envied me thee until now, and I shall not live after thee'; and her soul departed out of her, and she herself and Cuchulain were laid in one grave by Conal."[4]

The second great character of the Red Branch cycle is Deirdre.[5] The story of Deirdre constitutes the finest flower of early Irish literature. She has been called the Helen of Ireland, and the tragic pathos of her love and death has been almost endlessly rehandled by later writers—Ferguson, Yeats, Russell, and Synge among them.

The story recounts the birth of Deirdre, the daughter of the chief bard of King Conchobhar; the prediction by the seer Cathfaidh of evils to come because of her; Conchobhar's careful rearing of her with the idea of making her his wife; the charming episode of her falling in love with Naoise,[6] one of the three sons of Usnach, of their flight to Scotland, and of their happy days there; Conchobhar's embassy under Fergus

[1] Ē'fa.
[2] Tawn Bo Hool-n'ya.
[3] Nē'av.
[4] Translation by Douglas Hyde.
[5] Dār'dra.
[6] Nē'sha.

to offer peace and entreat their return; Deirdre's premonition of foul play, and her touching song of farewell to Scotland; their coming back to Erin, the treacherous slaughter of the three sons of Usnach, and the lament and suicide of Deirdre.

The Fenian cycle. The Fenian, or Ossianic, cycle deals with events that are supposed to have happened some two hundred years after those of the Red Branch cycle. The two outstanding figures in this cycle are Finn mac Cumhail[1] and his son Ossian, warriors and poets, the center of the group known as the Fenians, constituting a kind of Irish Round Table. The cycle is quite distinct from the Red Branch group of tales and is more popular in its appeal, touching the common life of the people, as the more aristocratic Red Branch stories do not. The Fenian tales have little of the epic sweep, elevation, and mystery to be found in the earlier cycle. They present the curious spectacle of a continued growth—the earliest stories going back probably to the seventh and eighth centuries, and the later material consisting not merely of copies, expansions, and elaborations but actually of new tales built up on minor incidents or suggestions contained in the earlier ones. Down to the eighteenth century Irish narrators were retelling and recreating Fenian stories. For a period of a thousand years, therefore, this cycle has been in process of development, and there are even today circulating in Ireland popular tales of Finn that have never been reduced to writing.

We can mention only the most important of the Fenian sagas. The longest is the "Colloquy of the Ancients," which in fragmentary dialogue form represents the bards Ossian and Caoilte[2] in their old age, the last survivors of the Fenian band, narrating to Saint Patrick the legends and poems connected with the hills, streams, and shores of Ireland. More appealing as a story is the romance of the "Pursuit of Diarmuid and Grainne,"[3] a love story resembling in some respects that of Deirdre, but of lesser artistic merit. Grainne, the daughter of King Cormac, on the eve of her marriage to Finn mac Cumhail, falls in love with Diarmuid and takes flight with him. They are pursued by Finn, who, after many adventures, contrives

[1] Cool. [2] Cült'ya (French *u*). [3] Grän'ya.

the death of Diarmuid by means of a wild boar, and later regains the love of the somewhat changeable Grainne for himself.

The three medieval cycles constitute what may properly be called the high-water mark in the history of Irish literature. Their material never reached the point of true epic structure: it is often rather formless and ill organized. Especially in some of its later manifestations, it is long-winded and rhetorical. But in the best tales of the Red Branch and Fenian cycles it possesses in its loftier passages a dignity and elevation of tone, and in its softer moments a charm and delicacy and pathos, that are rarely surpassed in any literature. It is not until we come to the brilliant literary revival at the close of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century that we have anything to record that can approach the excellence of the Red Branch and Fenian cycles.

Short religious and devotional poems are scattered throughout the early Christian period, some of them of exquisite fineness and beauty, as shown, for example, in the following typical stanza from the "Song of Manchan the Hermit":

"Twelve in the church to chant the hours, kneeling there twain and twain;
And I before, near the chapel door, listening their low refrain."[1]

The bardic schools. It may be well at this point to give some indication of the Irish metrical forms and of the poetic schools which practiced them. In the earliest fragments of Irish poetry there is no rime, but in fragments dating from the seventh century, and even earlier, rime is employed; and certain scholars even go so far as to claim for Ireland the invention of rime. It has always been an important element in Irish versification. The earliest form was assonance. Versification was governed by a very complex system of rules, constituting an intricate metrical code. The bardic schools existed alongside the religious foundations for nearly a thousand years. A bard of the first rank had to spend from fifteen to twenty years in study, master over three hundred types of verse form, and memorize three hundred and fifty stories.

[1] Translation by Eleanor Hull.

ST. MATTHEW

An illustration from the "Book of Kells"

Minor Writers

In spite of the destruction by the Danes of the schools and monasteries and of the manuscripts contained in them, the Danish period (795–1014) shows several worthy names. Gormly, the daughter of Flann Siona, king of Meath, was a poet of high talent, as appears in her "Lament for Niall," her husband. Mac Laig, the chief bard of Brian Boru, has left us a description of the battle of Clontarf (fought in 1014), in which Brian and most of his chiefs were slain; and also a beautiful "Lament for Kincora," the palace of Brian, left desolate after the battle. The pathetic monologue entitled "The Old Woman of Beare" goes back probably to the eleventh century. The last stanza runs as follows:

> "I find them not,
> Those sunny sands I knew so well of yore;
> Only the surf's sad roar sounds up to me—
> My tide will turn no more."[1]

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries occurred the compilation of the most important of those rich collections of manuscripts in which the bulk of the saga-romances are preserved, among them the "Leabhar na h-Uidhre"[2] ("Book of the Dun Cow"), the "Book of Leinster," the "Book of Hymns," and the marvelous "Book of Kells," referred to by Douglas Hyde as the crowning glory of Irish manuscript illumination. The "Saltair-na-Rann" ("Rann Psalter"), a book of devotional poems, some of high merit, is dated by most scholars in the eleventh or twelfth century. During the four centuries following the Anglo-Norman conquest—the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth—there is almost nothing of importance to record in the field of literary production.

A gradual decline of the bardic schools and of the Irish language as a literary medium took place during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This period, however, witnessed the production, or at least transcription, of the Ossianic poems, which must be care-

[1] Translation by Eleanor Hull.

[2] Lo'war na wē'ra.

fully distinguished from the Ossianic, or Fenian, romance cycle. The poems were originally composed at intervals during the whole period between the close of the Danish rule and the mid-eighteenth century. Nothing is known of their authorship. As to quantity, they have been estimated to include from eighty to a hundred thousand lines, only a portion of which has seen the light of publication in book form. These poems are largely narrative—the only considerable body of Irish poetry of which this is true. They deal mainly with the combats of the Fenian heroes, their struggles with monsters, their enchantments, wanderings, hardships, etc. Some passages show a very fine lyrical tone, such as the short poems on "The Blackbird of Derrycarn" and "The Pastimes of Finn."

The final glow of the Classical school—the writers in the ancient bardic meters—comes in the work of Lughaidh[1] O'Clery, Eochaidh[2] O'Hussey, and the most notable writer of the group, Teig Dall O'Higgin. Much of the poetry of these writers has for its theme a lament over the harsh rule of the English or indignant resentment against it.

With surprising swiftness, in the early part of the eighteenth century, the old system of poetics was displaced by a new one, originating apparently with the Gaels of Scotland. It involved a great simplification of the rules, ignored the requirements of apprenticeship and official status, chose its subject matter freely, and expressed itself with refreshing spontaneity and naturalness. Technically the change was from assonance to regular rime, and to a meter based on accent rather than on the number of syllables in the line. In other words, the new versification was based upon the modern system of metrics. Some of the poetry in this modern form reveals a musical use of words that has seldom been surpassed. We may note the miscellaneous poems of John O'Neaghtan, the graceful songs of Turlough O'Carolan, "The Midnight Court" of Brian mac Giolla Meidhre,—a charming fairy fantasy,—the witty verses of Owen Roe O'Sullivan, and the appealing short poems of the blind poet Anthony Raftery, who died in 1835. Here are two stanzas from one of his poems:

[1] Lü'hĭ. [2] Yō'hē.

"I am Raftery the poet,
Full of hope and love,
With eyes that have no light,
With gentleness that has no misery—

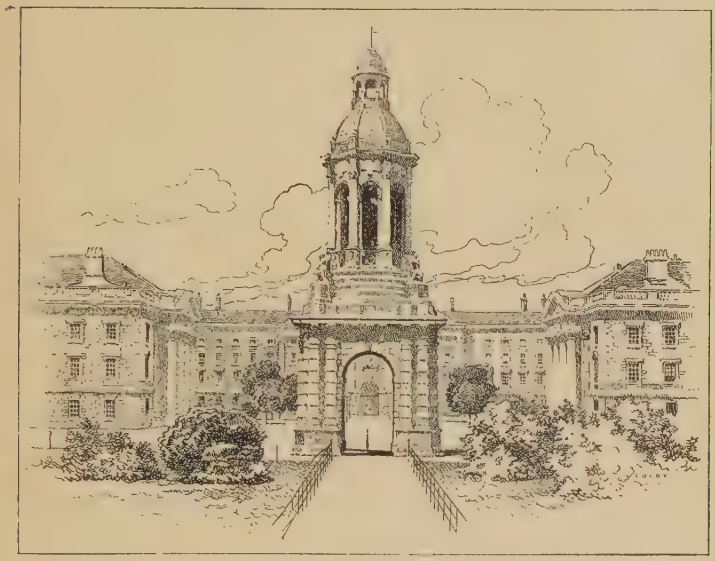
"Going west upon my pilgrimage
By the light of my heart,
Feeble and tired
To the end of my road."[1]

Nineteenth-Century Writers

Poetry. We have now to consider the Irish literature written in the English language in the years following the extinction of the Irish language as a literary medium. We may eliminate from our survey such writers as Goldsmith, Burke, Sheridan, Lecky, and Oscar Wilde, who are practically always thought of as figures in English rather than Irish literature. A considerable part of the nineteenth century was occupied by the political movement for nationalism, and the literary activity during these years became either an appendage to this movement or was pushed into the background. In the early years of the century anonymous ballads inspired by the patriotic motive, such as "The Wearin' o' the Green," "The Boyne Water," and "The Shan Van Vocht," achieved a wide popularity. Thomas Moore's "Irish Melodies" can hardly be said to rise much above the level of pleasant mediocrity, though they show a skilled command of metrical form and have in not a few instances become popular as songs—such, for example, as "The Last Rose of Summer," and "Believe me if All Those Endearing Young Charms." Of the "Young Ireland" group of poets, active from 1840 to about 1860, James Clarence Mangan (1803–1849) alone shows a genuine appreciation of the rich storehouse of old Irish literature. He is the one nineteenth-century poet of superior genius and accomplishment prior to the great names of the Celtic revival. He is thought of by the poets of the later movement as spiritually akin to themselves and indeed almost as the father of the revival.

[1] Translation by Douglas Hyde.

Some of his poems and some of the aspects of his life show a spirit resembling that of Edgar Allan Poe. His "Dark Rosaleen" is a finely poetic elaboration of the old Irish "Roisin Dubh"[1] (the



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"Dark Rose"), which makes use of the flower so often used by the poets as a symbol for Ireland. One stanza of Mangan's version of this poem is as follows:

"I could scale the blue air,
I could plough the high hills,
O, I could kneel all night in prayer,
To heal your many ills!
And one beamy smile from you
Would float like light between
My toils and me, my own, my true,
My Dark Rosaleen!"

[1] Rŏ' shēn dū.

Sir Samuel Ferguson, while less of a poet than Mangan, was a scholar of sound attainments and in his "Lays of the Western Gael" achieved excellent translations from the Red Branch cycle.

Fiction. The mention of a very few names will cover the field of Irish fiction until well past the middle of the century. Maria Edgeworth (1767–1849), in "Castle Rackrent," "The Absentee," and "Ormond," has given us some vivid portrayals of the Irish gentry of her times. Charles Lever (1806–1872) has pictured in "Harry Lorrequer," "Charles O'Malley," and numerous other novels the roistering, swaggering young Irish blade. Samuel Lover (1797–1868), with somewhat more of sympathy and delicacy, reveals in such novels as "Handy Andy" and "Rory O'More" some well-drawn characters of peasant life. Both these writers, however, may be called the sponsors of the "comedy Irishman," that rather shallow and unreal combination of brogue and blarney that has so long misrepresented the race. The brothers John and Michael Banim find their themes in the historical and patriotic aspects of Irish life and the hard lot of the peasantry under English rule. Their best work appears in "Tales of the O'Hara Family," "The Boyne Water," "The Peep o' Day," and "The Croppy." William Carleton (1794–1869), one of the finest and truest interpreters of Irish life in this period, deals for the most part with the peasantry, the hedge schoolmaster, and the bitterness of the strife between Orangeman and Papist. Such pictures as he presents in "Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry," "The Black Prophet," and "Valentine McClutchy" have a vividness and reality that show a master hand. The most important novelist of middle-class life in this period was Gerald Griffin. His best novel, "The Collegians," is a good reflection of the outstanding types of character of the class with whom he deals. Griffin's poetry also deserves praise, especially some of his love lyrics. Charles Kickham, who suffered four years' imprisonment for devotion to the cause of Young Ireland, wrote novels of considerable power, depicting peasant types and rural life in general. Two of his best novels are "Sally Cavanagh" and "For the Old Land."

O'Grady and Sigerson. Much of the inspiration for the later revival of literature in Ireland traces back to Standish O'Grady, who, in 1880, under the commonplace title of "A History of Ireland," gave the world an account of the heroic myths of Cuchulain and Finn. He approached his theme in a mood of ardent poetic enthusiasm and has clothed the old legends in such splendid imagery as to make his appeal well-nigh irresistible to later Irish writers. It is hardly too much to say that virtually all the writers of the Celtic revival owe a very real and profound debt to O'Grady, whose influence upon their work is apparent in many ways. Sharing to some extent with O'Grady the honor of reviving the spell of Irish antiquity, George Sigerson spans the chasm between early and late with his "Poets and Poetry of Munster" (1860) and his "Bards of the Gael and Gall" (1897). Sigerson's merit consists in the wide range of his material, his fine absorption of the spirit and tone of his originals, and his remarkable skill in reproducing in his translations the verse forms of the old poets.

Historical background. The course of Irish literature is marked by two high tides of poetic achievement—that of the early saga-romance period, prior to the Danish invasions, and that of the Celtic revival (presently to be spoken of), a manifestation of the last thirty years. The intervening centuries, particularly those of the English attempts at domination in the island, have been relatively, and at times almost wholly, barren. From the time of Henry II, toward the close of the twelfth century, to that of Gladstone, toward the close of the nineteenth, Ireland has been the scene of repeated attempts at conquest by the English and of stubborn resistance and rebellion by the Irish. Thoughtful Englishmen are not proud of the record of the British government in its dealings with Ireland—dealings which have been too largely marked by shortsighted coercion, attempted suppression of the Irish language, and undisguised contempt for Irish art and culture. It is surprising that under such a régime literature should have survived at all; but poetry has so firm a growth in the Irish temperament and character that even under the stress of political turmoil it has never been quite silent

and has often burst forth with surprising vitality. Every Irish insurrection has had its poets as well as its fighters—indeed they have commonly been one and the same. But the troubled political history of Ireland is a sufficient explanation of the comparatively low level of her literary production during the years in question.

The Celtic Revival

Beginnings. The Celtic revival, or Irish literary revival, as it is sometimes called, was a thoroughly conscious propagandist movement. It was represented by a manifesto of typical verse published in 1888 and entitled "Poems and Ballads of Young Ireland." It was backed by such organizations as the Irish Literary Society (London) and the Irish National Literary Society (Dublin), both founded in 1892. It was accompanied by a persistent attempt at a restoration of the Irish language, in which Douglas Hyde and the Gaelic League have been especially active. Dr. Hyde's best work consists of poems, tales, and short plays written in Gaelic. He has, however, written a good deal in English, including thoroughly adequate translations of folk songs and stories, such as his remarkable volume "Love Songs of Connacht." Among the other writers who were important in originating the revival were John Todhunter, William Larminie, and Katherine Tynan Hinkson.

Yeats. The most conspicuous and one of the most influential names in the Irish literary revival is that of William Butler Yeats (1866–). In some of his earlier work he was under the spell of Spenser and Shelley, but with "The Wanderings of Oisin" (1889) he entered upon his real inheritance as the chief spokesman for poetic Ireland, in a style that was an original and adequate expression of the Irish genius and not merely a reflected light. A very large part of Yeats's poetry deals with the legendary period or with popular beliefs and customs of Ireland. It is intensely national, but in the poetic rather than the political sense. Perhaps the most satisfying of his lyrics are those included in the "Poems" of 1895, inspired by the hills and streams and peasant tales of the countryside. One of the most popular and deeply poetic of his short poems

is that one in which his heart turns longingly from city streets to a well-remembered and deeply loved Irish scene—"The Lake Isle of Innisfree." Notable also for their exquisite lyric quality are "The Song of Wandering Aengus," "Down by the Salley Gardens," "When You are Old," "The White Birds," "The Rose of the World," and "The Hosting of the Sidhe." The fine and direct appeal of these earlier poems was later displaced to a considerable extent by Yeats's experiments in mysticism. The poems in the volume entitled "The Wind among the Reeds" (1899) and in his later volumes of poetry are often obscure to the average reader.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

The plays of Yeats are more poetic than dramatic. They are very impressive, with a strange, haunting depth of meaning in which action plays a decidedly minor part. "The Land of Heart's Desire" is based on the fairy theme of the young bride stolen away by the elves. "Cathleen ni Houlihan" pictures the appeal of Ireland in the stormy days of 1798 to young Michael Gillane, who, on the eve of his wedding, answers this higher call. "Shadowy Waters," "Deirdre," and "On Baile's Strand" deal with the heroic age, the last with the death of Cuchulain. Yeats has recast rather than transcribed these legends and tales—has made them stand for the eternal quest of the soul for beauty or supreme reality. The poetic charm of the plays—for they are all written in poetic form—is the same as that which characterizes his best nondramatic poetry: the

almost magical recapture of the far-away mystery and spell of Celtic tradition, so moving in its appeal.

Yeats's prose writings include transcripts of popular tales, and essays on literary and mystical subjects, thus paralleling in a general way his poetical work. "The Celtic Twilight" is a collection of tales dealing with the supernatural, taken down by Yeats himself from the recital by Sligo and Galway peasants. These tales have all the unaffected charm of substance and speech that characterizes the "Poems" of 1895. In "Ideas of Good and Evil" and "The Cutting of an Agate" we have the best of Yeats's essays. Those on literary themes are admirably clear and direct, while those dealing with ethical and religious subjects are in his confirmed vein of shadowy mysticism.

The importance of Yeats lies less in his direct influence upon the literary revival or upon the national theater than in his having freed Ireland from the tutelage of English poetry and proved that she has a poetic voice of her own. He is among the greatest of living poets, and his service to literature in his own land is broader and deeper than his connection with any special movement or group.

Other poets of the revival. George W. Russell (1867–1935), writing under the pen name of "Æ," is the outstanding exponent of mysticism in the Irish literary revival. He is a mystic in the sense in which Yeats is not—his visions are to him realities, not imagined pictures made to symbolize an idea. His poetry gives expression to the theme of direct and immediate absorption into the divine life. He loves the twilight borderland and dwells always on the frontier of the undiscovered country. He is wholly unaffected and humble, and while he has not Yeats's wide command of poetic resources, he is as truly a poet, and one of the most notable in the movement. His tendency to transfuse all common things with the infinite light is well expressed in one of his lyrics entitled "The Hermit," two stanzas of which are as follows:

"And the ancient mystery
Holds its hands out day by day,
Takes a chair and croons with me
By my cabin built of clay.

"When the dusky shadow flits,
By the chimney nook I see
Where the old enchanter sits,
Smiles, and waves, and beckons me."[1]

Seumas O'Sullivan's "Poems" (1912) is one of the most satisfying volumes of contemporary Irish poetry. It is Celtic in the characteristic qualities of shadowy, wistful suggestion and strange melancholy. Joseph Campbell is unsurpassed in such themes as those of humble peasant life and rural scenes. He says:

"The silence of unlabored fields
Lies like a judgment on the air:
A human voice is never heard:
The sighing grass is everywhere—
The sighing grass, the shadowed sky,
The cattle crying wearily!"

Campbell is also perhaps the most successful of the Irish poets in his handling of the strange and often fantastic folk tales of the Christian faith as they have evolved in the mind of the Irish peasant. Mrs. Seumas MacManus ("Ethna Carbery"), in her "Four Winds of Erinn," has sounded some of the dominant notes of Irish nature and character. Her poems strike a happy medium between the popular tone of the Young Ireland nationalist sentiment and the suggestive and symbolic quality of the group centering in Yeats and Russell.

It must not be assumed that the poets of the revival are not in sympathy with the nationalist movement in Ireland. Most of them are; but they feel that poetry finds a better soil and a more congenial atmosphere in the romantic past of Ireland than in its discordant present. The Sinn Fein[2] movement has its poets, as has been true of every similar movement in Irish history. The Easter insurrection of 1916 resulted in the execution, among others, of three Irish poets of promise—Padraic Pearse, Thomas MacDonagh, and Joseph Plunkett.

[1] This selection, from "Collected Poems," by George William Russell, is used by permission of The Macmillan Company.

[2] Shĭn făn.

The Irish theater. The most striking manifestation of the Irish literary revival has been on its dramatic side. The first aspect of the movement was centered in the foundation and development of the Irish Literary Theater in Dublin. Yeats, Edward Martyn, George Moore, Lady Gregory, and other writers constituted the group back of this enterprise, which was aimed primarily at achieving conditions under which dramatic work of high merit might be fostered without subservience to the commercial element. The program was inaugurated in 1899. The most notable playwright of the group, aside from Yeats, was Edward Martyn. "The Heather Field," "Maeve," and "The Enchanted Sea" are among his best plays. His work consists chiefly of social and psychological studies of contemporary life in Ireland outside the peasantry. And it was on the assumption that a more truly national drama could be evolved by placing the emphasis on legendary, folk, and peasant themes that Yeats and Lady Gregory withdrew to devote their energies to establishing the Irish National Theater. In 1902 the first performances of the new organization were given, and since 1904 its playhouse, the Abbey Theater, has stood for what must be regarded as one of the most remarkable and hopeful dramatic developments of recent years.

In some respects more important than the work of Yeats himself, especially in its bearing on the development of a people's drama, is that of **John Millington Synge**[1] (1871–1909). During the six years between 1903 and his death he produced a series of plays which are unique in dramatic history. Of these the most important are "In the Shadow of the Glen," "Riders to the Sea," "The Playboy of the Western World," and "The Well of the Saints." Synge has employed a style based upon the actual speech of the peasantry of Wicklow and of the Aran Islands, but has transformed it into a medium of rare poetic quality, though all his plays are, technically speaking, in prose. Synge has sometimes been called a realist in his treatment of Irish peasant life, but he is rather one of those rare writers who are interested in reality rather than realism. He has no

[1] Sing.

message in the ordinary didactic sense of the term. He presents universally human reactions to the typical experiences of life—futile protest at the coming of death, as in "Riders to the Sea"; inveterate clinging to romance, as in "The Playboy"; insistence upon dream and illusion as being more beautiful than reality, as in "The Well of the Saints."

So far as actual realism in the treatment of peasant life in Ireland is concerned, we find it rather in the plays of **Padraic Colum** than in those of Synge. With a keen eye, a sure touch, a careful balance of structure, and a very deep sympathy with his subject, Colum has given us in "The Land," "The Fiddler's House," and "Thomas Muskerry" striking pictures of peasant Ireland and the forces that are at work in it. Colum is no more desirous than Synge of producing problem plays: certainly there are problems at the root of his plays, but he seeks primarily to bring out the drama of country life in Ireland as a revelation of human experience. Colum's poems, especially the volume entitled "Wild Earth" (1909), are strong with the strength of the soil—intense, intimate, vivid, expressing the struggle of man with the deep and vital forces of nature and the joy and pain of his round of common experience. We quote "A Cradle Song," one of the most appealing of his peasant poems:

"O men from the fields!
Come softly within,
Tread softly, softly,
O men coming in!

"Mavourneen is going
From me and from you;
Where Mary will fold him
With mantle of blue.

"From reek of the smoke
And cold of the floor,
And the peering of things
Across the half-door.

"O men from the fields!
Soft, softly come through;
Mary puts round him
Her mantle of blue."[1]

With the names mentioned—Yeats, Synge, Colum—we have covered the really notable figures in the Irish theater movement. Lady Gregory has done some excellent work in the field of drama, especially comedy. She is at her best in one-act plays designed to bring out some peculiarly Irish trait of character; such, for example, as "Spreading the News," "The Jackdaw," and "The Workhouse Ward." The plays of William Boyle, especially "The Building Fund," deserve to be mentioned. St. John Ervine, in his several plays and novels, has done much to reveal the essential tragedy underlying the common turns of circumstance in everyday Irish life. Creditable work in the drama has been done also by Seumas O'Kelly and George Fitzmaurice. The Ulster Theater in Belfast, corresponding in its aims and methods to the Dublin enterprise, is represented by at least one figure of note, "Rutherford Mayne" (Samuel Waddell), who has produced some dramatic studies of Protestant Ireland that deserve very high praise, for example, "The Turn of the Road" and "The Drone."

Fiction writers. Fiction has been, relatively speaking, a neglected form of literary art in Ireland. Among recent writers Emily Lawless and Jane Barlow show in their work a somewhat condescending quality in dealing with the humble side of life. Seumas MacManus and Shan Bullock have helped to bring Irish fiction somewhat into line with Irish poetry and drama in importance. George Moore, who can be claimed only in part by the Irish movement, has contributed to it a very superior volume of short stories —"The Untilled Field"—and an analytical and dreamlike novel, entitled "The Lake." The novels of Canon Sheehan, though imperfect in structure and somewhat diffuse in style, show him to be a keen and skillful interpreter of various types of Irish life, especially of the Irish priesthood at its best. Among the best of his novels, all

[1] This selection, from Colum's "Wild Earth and Other Poems," is used by permission of The Macmillan Company.

of which have a strongly Catholic coloring, are "My New Curate" and "Luke Delmege." Lord Dunsany has produced a series of wonder tales, including "The Gods of Pegana," "Time and the Gods," and "A Dreamer's Tales," inventing his own strange mythology for the purpose—weird, vast, impressive. Some of his work is cast in dramatic form; such, for example, as "The Gods of the Mountain" and "The Laughter of the Gods." The delightful fantasies of James Stephens—for instance, "The Crock of Gold" and "The Demi-Gods"—play with characteristic Celtic nimbleness on the border line between heaven and earth. His whimsical little poems, sometimes only half a dozen lines in length, are a charming revelation of the buoyancy, the light-heartedness, the assertive and unabashed good fellowship, of a fundamentally Irish nature.

Within the past few years there has been in Ireland a rather significant return from romance to realism, especially in fiction. The common round of life, unrelieved by poetic glamor or the excitement of rare adventure, the harsh and often unlovely environment of the poor in village and city, the pathos of hope deferred and effort without avail, are attracting a number of capable writers. Conspicuous among the recent writers of fiction who have entered this field are James Joyce, Daniel Corkery, Darrell Figgis, and Forrest Reid, much of whose work is of real value and distinction.

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Suggested Topics

Legendary Ireland.
The Irish missionaries to England and the Continent.
The Irish language.
Irish fairy lore.
Cuchulain and Odysseus as epic heroes.
English rule in Ireland.
Early nineteenth-century fiction in Ireland.
Impulse and motive of the Celtic revival.
William B. Yeats—his life and works.
The Irish theater.
The plays of John M. Synge.
Lady Gregory and her work.
Recent Irish fiction.
Lord Dunsany.
Contemporary Irish poetry.

CHAPTER XV

AMERICAN LITERATURE

The American Spirit

The United States is a very young nation. The brief period of its independent existence—less than a hundred and fifty years—makes it a mere infant as compared with almost all the other nations whose literature has been reviewed in this book. Those nations have certain more or less clearly defined national traits, which color their literature and give it something of an individual tone. Perhaps it is too much to expect any such thing as a distinctive national quality to be developed in so short a period of national existence. A national spirit is the gradual result of ages upon ages of history and settled habitation. In the first place, we were a transplanted people; in the second place, we have become an amazingly composite people as viewed from the standpoints of nationality and race; and in the third place, we have undergone rapid and profound changes, geographically, industrially, and socially. All these things naturally interfere with the formation of a national spirit. Many attempts have been made to define the American spirit, or idea. It has been declared to reside in our political principles, in our buoyant hopefulness, in our devotion to liberty, in our rough-and-ready coping with frontier conditions, in our restless energy and enterprise. But these qualities are not peculiar to the American people, though some of them may be present in us in a more intense degree than in other peoples. As a matter of fact, it is extremely difficult, in spite of our boasted independence, for the most careful student to find in our literature any really distinctive quality that sets it off, let us say, from English literature, as in the case of the best writings of Ireland. Of course, with respect to subject matter our literature is American in a very

definite sense. But can we say that we have yet achieved a distinguishing form or spirit? Has the great American play or novel yet been written? We must be content in this chapter merely to record the most striking manifestations of our literature as it stands. A few more generations may perhaps see evolved in the United States a typically American literature.

The Beginnings

The Colonial period. The earliest settlers in this country had little time to devote to letters, and no idea of themselves as other than loyal Englishmen devoted to their king and to the land from which they had come. They followed the literary fashions prevailing in England. Down to the middle of the eighteenth century there is little to record. In the South virtually the only piece of writing worthy of mention is Colonel William Byrd's "History of the Dividing Line" (between Virginia and North Carolina). It is an interesting and well-written account of the wilderness and of the social life of his times among all classes. In the Middle States the name of Thomas Godfrey stands out as a versifier of some note. His "Prince of Parthia" is a creditable poetic tragedy modeled closely on the Elizabethan and Restoration plays of England.

The New England writers were more prolific. Their work was very largely religious and controversial in tone, even when not so in subject matter. The journal of Bradford and Winslow and the later "History of Plymouth Plantation" by Bradford lay no claim to literary style, but present a vivid account of the trials and triumphs of the early days of Plymouth Colony, colored throughout by a profound conviction of God's guiding providence. The godly Roger Williams preached absolute religious tolerance, in tracts which make very dreary reading, but which show a spirit much in advance of his times. And the ungodly Thomas Morton, by his hilarious colony of revelers at Merrymount, scandalized the Puritans of Boston. He satirized them also in his "New English Canaan," a volume of mingled fair and unfair criticism, which exerted a corrective influence.

The most popular piece of verse-writing of these early days was Wigglesworth's "Day of Doom." It presented in jingling rime a vivid account of the judgment of God upon all lost souls, including unregenerate infants, who, however, are allotted the "easiest room in hell." The verse of Anne Bradstreet is of a distinctly higher order. Among her "Contemplations" are certain short pieces which show a sincere feeling for nature and some real poetic power in expressing it.

Among the many notable preachers whose sermons and related writings constituted the bulk of the literary product of the times, we may single out the two greatest, Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards. Mather's most important work was his "Magnalia Christi," a Church history of New England. In a learned and laborious style he recounts a great mass of events, many of them based on evident hearsay or mere superstition, and traces in them all the marvelous providence of God. Edwards was a preacher of singular purity and sweetness of nature combined with the most unyielding religious dogma. We must not forget that his sermon on "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" is to be set over against many another on the love and grace of God, presented in most appealing language.

The diary of Samuel Sewall, covering the period from 1674 to 1729, is a refreshing account of the daily comings and goings of a person of importance, a fine piece of frank self-revelation and of comment on the times. Madame Knight's account of her journey from Boston to New York in 1704 is a delightful narrative of thoroughly human, good-humored reaction to the varied experiences she encountered.

The Revolutionary period. From 1750 on, colonial history is filled with the stirrings of a discontent against the rule of the mother country, a discontent which gradually increased in bitterness and culminated in the separation of the colonies from England. Religious and didactic works continued to be written, but the outstanding form taken by the literature of the period was that of the political pamphlet, state paper, and oration. We are all familiar with the fact of Jefferson's authorship of the Declara-

tion of Independence; but we are not so fully aware that in his numerous other writings he revealed a similar largeness of political wisdom which is only at this late day beginning to be fully appreciated. The writings of Washington, including his famous Farewell Address, are couched in a stately and dignified style. The great orators of the Revolution were Patrick Henry and James Otis. The untiring Samuel Adams, in his innumerable addresses and pamphlets, performed a work quite as important as that of the orators. Another writer of invaluable service, especially during the war, was Thomas Paine. The ill-judged attacks upon his "infidelity" have become a mere echo of long ago. His two pamphlets entitled "Common Sense" and "The Crisis" won to the American cause thousands of adherents in a peculiarly discouraging period of the war. One of the most enduring products of the times is the series of political essays known as "The Federalist," the joint work of Hamilton, Madison, and John Jay. It is a very penetrating analysis of the fundamental principles of government, written in a clear and logical style, and it had much to do with securing the adoption of the Constitution. The writings of the Loyalists, a group sincerely opposed to separation from England and subjected to much persecution for their views, must not be overlooked.

Most of the poetry of the period, with the single exception of that of Philip Freneau, has long since been deservedly forgotten. The best of Freneau's poetry, however, notably such fine lyrics as "The Indian Burying Ground," "The Wild Honeysuckle," and "The Catydid," has a permanent poetic value. The poetry inspired by the war was vast in amount, but Trumbull's "M'Fingal," a spirited satire on the Tories, is almost the only noteworthy production.

Deserving of special mention is the journal of John Woolman, bookkeeper, tailor, and itinerant Quaker preacher. The journal was edited many years later by Whittier, who calls it "a classic of the inner life." It is a quiet, modest, self-effacing narrative—"the sweetest and purest autobiography in the English language," says Channing. Woolman emphasizes the inherent goodness of the human heart. His ministry was one of kindly but fearless

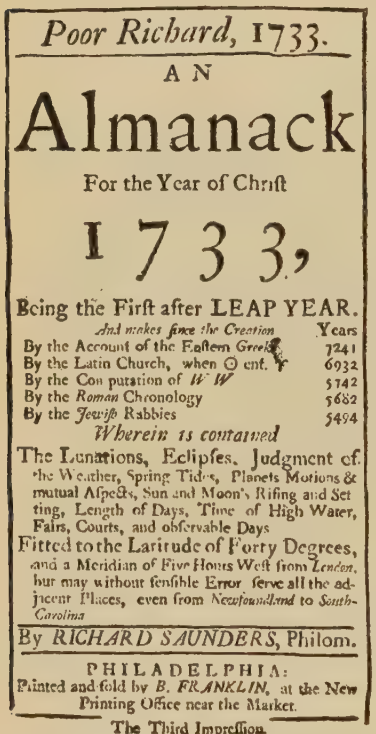
utterance of the truth. He was uncompromising, though not bitter or rancorous, in his opposition to slavery.

The notable series of "Letters from an American Farmer" by St. John Crèvecœur, a Frenchman who had settled in New Jersey, is full of Thoreau's enthusiasm for contact with the soil and, indeed, often reminds one of Thoreau in language and sentiment.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Standing head and shoulders above all the other writers of the Revolutionary period, however, is **Benjamin Franklin** (1706–1790). We can mention only in brief review some of the varied activities of his long and eminently useful life. He was printer, writer, scientific investigator, founder of the University of Pennsylvania, colonial agent for Pennsylvania and several of the other colonies, member of the Continental Congress, minister to France during the war, and member of the Constitutional Convention. He was a deist in religion, and what in our day might well be called a pragmatist in philosophy, centering his attention on the socially useful aspects of life rather than on the speculations of theology and metaphysics. He was always the counselor of prudence. There is little idealism in Franklin, there is no poetry, and there are no lofty flights of imagination. He is the practical man of affairs, with a due reverence for God but with a constant insistence upon the thought that God will help only those who help themselves.

Aside from his political pamphlets, Franklin's important writings may be reduced to two—"Poor Richard's Almanac" and the "Autobiography." The first was an annual publication covering the twenty-five years from 1733 to 1758 and containing, besides the usual calendar, many short paragraphs and maxims upon business, moral conduct, thrift, and the thousand and one aspects of the common man's experience. Together with the Bible it constituted almost the only reading matter of the vast majority of American farmers in those years. The "Autobiography," written in Franklin's old age, is an absorbingly interesting narrative of his boyhood and youth, of his experience as a printer, and of the varied activities of his early years in Philadelphia. It is thoroughly frank throughout, recording his occasional lapses from morality as well as his worthwhile achievements, the latter always referred to in an unassuming way. Franklin was an avowed disciple of Addison in his style. While the "Autobiography" lacks the polished elegance of Addison, it has all of his simplicity, directness, clearness, and quiet strength. It has held a high place as an American classic ever since its publication. Franklin may be said, more fully than any other American writer, to reflect the typical mood of the eighteenth century as revealed in English literature—plainness, common sense, tolerance, and the practical virtue of honesty.



Poor Richard, 1733.

AN

Almanack

For the Year of Christ

1733,

Being the First after LEAP YEAR.

	Years
And makes since the Creation	
By the Account of the Eastern *Greeks*	7241
By the Latin Church, when ⊙ ent. ♈	6932
By the Computation of *W. W.*	5742
By the *Roman* Chronology	5682
By the *Jewish* Rabbies	5494

Wherein is contained

The Lunations, Eclipses, Judgment of the Weather, Spring Tides, Planets Motions & mutual Aspects, Sun and Moon's Rising and Setting, Length of Days, Time of High Water, Fairs, Courts, and observable Days

Fitted to the Latitude of Forty Degrees, and a Meridian of Five Hours West from *London*, but may without sensible Error serve all the adjacent Places, even from *Newfoundland* to *South-Carolina*

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The Third Impression.

TITLE-PAGE FROM "POOR RICHARD'S ALMANAC"

The Nineteenth Century (1800–1835)

The first generation after the establishment of the national government was marked by a general sentiment of enthusiasm for the destiny of the new state. By far the greater part of the literature of the times reveals the rather shallow, exaggerated aspect of the new national pride and is of little permanent value.

WASHINGTON IRVING

Our first professional man of letters was Charles Brockden Brown of Philadelphia (1771–1810). His six novels were all written in the last twelve years of his short life. Of these "Wieland," "Arthur Mervyn," and "Edgar Huntly" are the most important. Brown's novels are romantic in quality, with much excitement and strange adventure. They are somber and almost morbid in tone, and crude and ill-regulated in style. Brown was definitely under the influence of William Godwin, and also of the "Gothic romance" writers of English literature, of whom Mrs. Radcliffe was the conspicuous example.

Irving. The two really great names of this period are those of Irving and Cooper. Washington Irving (1783–1859) was born in New York City. One of his earliest works, his "Knickerbocker History of New York," is a humorous treatment of the Dutch settlement and régime, with a considerable basis of fact—more than was relished by the aristocratic Dutch families of his time. From 1815 to 1832 Irving lived abroad, most of the time in Eng-

land but for three years in Spain. His long contact with English life, his eminent fairness, and his genial temperament made him an ideal interpreter of American life to Englishmen, and vice versa. Many of the essays in "The Sketch Book," on the whole his most important work, are directed to this end and had no small effect in promoting a more friendly relation between the two countries. The two most popular sketches in the volume are "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." They are charmingly written and reveal the kindly humor of the author, his shrewd insight into character, and his mastery of the literary form employed. "Bracebridge Hall" is a further treatment of English aristocratic country life, the germ of which appears in the Christmas essays in "The Sketch Book." Irving's stay in Spain, supplemented by a later residence there as United States minister, resulted in the delightful volume of tales entitled "The Alhambra" and in his historical works "The Life and Voyages of Columbus," "The Conquest of Granada," and "Mahomet and his Successors." Irving's historical writings, including his later "Life of Washington" and his "Astoria," are the result of conscientious research, but have been largely superseded by the discovery of new material and by a more scientific and scholarly method. In Irving's best manner, however, is his affectionate biography of Oliver Goldsmith, to whom he was drawn by a very considerable affinity of temperament.

Irving is at his best in the short sketch or tale. He had many interests and was sympathetic, tolerant, benevolent, and gently critical. His humor is rich and mellow and never unkindly. There is no great intensity or depth in his writings. He does not explore the profound issues of life, but plays upon its surface, content to afford his reader some little pleasure in this humdrum world or to interest him in some mild reform of conduct or social intercourse. His style is happy and leisurely and is inclined somewhat to the elegance of what we now call the "old school." He was wholly an influence for good—if not in a great way, at least in a very wholesome and useful way.

James Fenimore Cooper (1789–1851), the greatest of early American novelists, was born in New Jersey, spent his boyhood on

his father's estate at Cooperstown, in western New York,—the frontier of those days,—was dismissed from Yale in his third year for taking part in a student escapade, served as a seaman, married the daughter of a wealthy New York Tory, spent seven years abroad (three of them as United States consul at Lyons), and passed his declining years at Cooperstown.

Cooper's familiarity with the frontier and with the ocean put him into possession of excellent narrative material, which he handled with dramatic effect. He wrote thirty-two novels, seven or eight of which take their place with the best Romantic fiction yet produced in America. His first great success, "The Spy," is a story of Revolutionary times. The best of his several sea stories are "The Pilot" and "The Red Rover." These show an enthusiasm for the sea, a fine descriptive power, well-wrought characterization, and a superb handling of exciting incident. It is, however, upon the so-called Leatherstocking series of scout and Indian stories that Cooper's reputation most firmly rests. The titles are "The Deerslayer," "The Last of the Mohicans" (perhaps his best and certainly his most popular novel), "The Pathfinder," "The Pioneers," and "The Prairie." These novels are rich in thrilling adventure, and the leading characters—especially Leatherstocking himself, Chingachgook, and Uncas—are finely conceived. Cooper has no rival in the field of the Indian story. He presents the fine and noble as well as the baser qualities of the Indian character, though his Indians are sometimes too melodramatic. His stories are still popular, and are more widely read in Europe than those of any other American novelist. Cooper was, moreover, a relentless critic of the crudeness and shallowness of civilized American life.

Cooper's faults are no less conspicuous than his virtues. His style, though animated, is often careless and diffuse. He is given to tedious moralizing. His women and many of his minor characters are almost wholly mechanical. He could not write an effective love scene; he has practically no sense of humor; he is decidedly inferior to Scott, to whom he is often compared; but with all his shortcomings, Cooper has and will probably retain a secure place in the hearts of all lovers of romance.

The Nineteenth Century (1835–1870)

The second generation of our national life has sometimes been called the great creative period in our literature. "Creative" is a strong word—too strong, probably, to apply to any but a small fraction of the writing produced. It is true, however, that the period includes more authors of superior excellence than any other in our history. This fact is due largely to a generally high level of prosperity, together with the cultural advantages attendant upon it. Especially in New England there arose an intellectual aristocracy in which the severity of the old theology had been mellowed by time. The influence of the universities, particularly Harvard, and the broader view of life consequent upon foreign travel and familiarity with foreign culture, continental as well as English, were also factors of importance. The chief issue was, of course, the contest over slavery. Virtually all the Northern writers were committed to the antislavery cause. It was the period also of the development of the West, of the beginning of the great flood of immigration, and of the early stages of that industrialism which was soon to achieve so gigantic and commanding an importance in our national life.

Bryant. The first great name in the field of literature in this period is that of William Cullen Bryant (1794–1878). He was a native of Cummington, Massachusetts, but passed the greater part of his long life in New York City, as journalist, author, and influential citizen. Bryant's poetry is marked first of all by an intense love of nature, which in its serener aspects forms almost the constant theme of his work. Of nearly equal importance is the strongly religious and often didactic quality, at first somewhat severe, but softened with his advancing years. Bryant is almost always serious in his thought. The shortness of life and the mortality of all things are favorite themes with him, as in his earliest noteworthy poem, "Thanatopsis." Only rarely, as in "Robert of Lincoln," does he yield to a lighter and more playful mood. Of his long series of nature poems, "Monument Mountain," "The Death of the Flowers," "A Forest Hymn," "To a

Waterfowl," "To a Fringed Gentian," and "The Yellow Violet" are typical. In his nature poetry he reflects the intimate and reverent spirit of Wordsworth. His translation of Homer, in blank verse, is one of the best in English. Bryant's style in general is grave and dignified, carefully wrought, and well adapted to his subject matter. He was the first American poet to employ blank verse in an abundant and masterly way, and in this fact too we realize the influence of Wordsworth's longer poems.

EDGAR ALLAN POE

Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849) was born in Boston, of parents who were traveling actors. He became an orphan in his infancy and was adopted by Mr. John Allan of Richmond, Virginia. He attended school in England and at Richmond. Mr. Allan's refusal to pay Poe's gambling debts resulted in his leaving the University of Virginia in less than a year. He served two years in the army and about a year at West Point. The rest of his life was a series of brief journalistic ventures in Baltimore, Richmond, New York, and Philadelphia. His poverty and the death of his young wife, to whom he was tenderly devoted, told heavily upon him, and his last years were darkened by bitterness, intemperance, and neglect. He is a unique figure in American literature, and a sad one. His troubled career was due largely to his own failings, but it has been the occasion of much one-sided and unfair comment.

Poe is the one American author whose imaginative work is wholly detached from the current of his times and wholly set in the realm of simple beauty. He is remarkable also for a total absence of the religious and moralizing element. He never tries to teach a lesson. His work is entirely a matter of artistic sufficiency. All his poems are lyrical, and hence short. To mention only a few of the best—"The Raven," "The Bells," "Ulalume," "To Helen," "Israfel," "Annabel Lee," "The Haunted Palace," "The City in the Sea," are full of the haunting sadness and strangeness of a mind that dwells in a world beyond space and time. He is supreme among our poets in melody and harmony and in sensuous beauty of detail. The following lines from "The City in the Sea" are illustrative of Poe's quality:

"Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down."

Poe was a master also in the field of the short story, greater in his way than Irving or Hawthorne. His short stories fall into two groups: imaginative and intellectual. The first group is characterized by much the same qualities as his poems. He preferred themes that could be worked up to a climax of horror or fear. Such tales as "The Cask of Amontillado," "The Masque of the Red Death," "The Black Cat," and "The Fall of the House of Usher" are examples of Poe's best work in the short story. In the group of intellectual tales we may mention "The Gold Bug," one of the best mystery stories in our literature, skillfully combining the narrative suspense of the discovery of a hidden treasure with the ingenious interpretation of a cryptogram revealing its location. Another of these tales, "The Purloined Letter," is the forerunner and model of a vast flood of detective stories by other authors. "The Adventures of Hans Pfaal" and "A Descent into the Maelstrom" are typical of Poe's pseudo-scientific tales—involving a

clever use of scientific principles in the working-out of strange adventures that capture the imagination of the reader.

Poe was also a literary critic, of very searching and usually (though not always) just temper. Poetry he defined as "the creation of rhythmic beauty." The writer, whether in verse or imaginative prose, says Poe, must first conceive the effect he desires to produce—wonder, terror, resignation, illusion, or what not—and then select his characters, events, settings, and other factors with a view to their suitability in attaining this effect. This method Poe employed in the best of his own work, and employed it supremely well.

The South. Together with Poe we may group certain other writers of the South. Among these are the two friends Henry Timrod and Paul Hamilton Hayne, the most important members of the rather notable Charleston group. Both were loyally devoted to the Confederate cause and were impoverished and broken physically by the war and its after effects. Many of Timrod's lyrics, especially his sonnets, show a fine response to the beautiful and a gently melancholy tone. His best-known poem, "The Cotton Boll," is an enthusiastic eulogy of the new Confederacy. Hayne in his best moments produced lyrics revealing grace and tender emotion and a fine responsiveness to natural beauty, especially that of the Southern pine. The novels of William Gilmore Simms show the influence of Scott and Cooper. Though inferior to the latter as a writer of Indian stories, Simms has produced some creditable work in this field. His best novels, however,—for example, "The Kinsmen," "Katharine Walton," and "The Partisan,"—deal with the South in Revolutionary times.

The Middle States. An outstanding figure in the literature of the Middle States is Bayard Taylor of Pennsylvania (1825–1878). He was a wide traveler, and his various books of travel are interesting if not highly important. The same may be said of his poetic plays. On the other hand, many of his short poems on local themes and characters—such, for example, as those found in "California Ballads," "Pennsylvania Idyls," and "Poems of the Orient"—show a considerable poetic power. Included in the last-named

volume is his best-known lyric, the "Bedouin Song"—swift, passionate, intense:

"From the desert I come to thee,
On a stallion shod with fire;
And the winds are left behind
In the speed of my desire."

Taylor's translation of Goethe's "Faust" is faithful and at the same time of high poetic value—the best that we have in English.

Herman Melville (1819–1891), in his novels of adventure, "Typee" and "Omoo," and more especially in "Moby Dick," has captured and given expression to the spirit of the sea with a masterly effectiveness. His real excellence has only recently begun to receive the attention and appreciation which it merits.

Orators. Of the famous preachers of the time, Henry Ward Beecher of Brooklyn was the most distinguished. He was a strong antislavery man, and his numerous addresses on the slavery question were of definite value to the Northern cause. In the field of political oratory the so-called "three giants"—Calhoun, Clay, and Webster—wrestled with the problems of the nature of the Constitution and the right of secession. John C. Calhoun (1782–1850) was the great champion of the Southern cause, and his speeches are keenly analytical, forceful, and logically organized. Daniel Webster (1782–1852), one of the greatest orators of modern times, stood for the principle of national unity and defended it with an unparalleled strength of legal and historical mastery. His speech in reply to Hayne is probably the greatest address ever delivered in the United States Senate. Henry Clay (1777–1852), called by his admirers "the silver-tongued Kentuckian," was less lofty in his utterance than Calhoun or Webster, but had a genius for compromise that proved of great service in more than one national crisis. Two of the most formidable opponents of slavery in Congress were Wendell Phillips and Charles Sumner.

Almost all the orators we have just mentioned belong to what we may call the "old school"—lofty, dignified, giving utterance to sonorous, rolling periods; in short, oratorical in the most em-

phatic sense of the word. Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865), however, may well be regarded as the founder of a new school of oratory. His first important utterance—the famous "house divided against itself" speech at Springfield—is typical. Lincoln's characteristic quality runs through his portions of the Douglas debates, making these portions excellent models for the student of debating. His other notable speeches and his letters and State papers, such as the famous Cooper Union address, the letter to Greeley, and other writings, reveal the same quality. His style is plain, simple, direct, unadorned, almost conversational in tone, and above all absolutely clear and logical. He was a past master in the handling of balance, antithesis, and anecdote. In his greater moments, represented by the Gettysburg speech and the two inaugural addresses, he rises to a poetic and prophetic height of simple power that leaves the sensational rhetoric of Douglas and even the mighty periods of Webster far behind. The letter to Mrs. Bixby is characteristic of the man and his style:

"Executive Mansion, Washington,
November 21, 1864

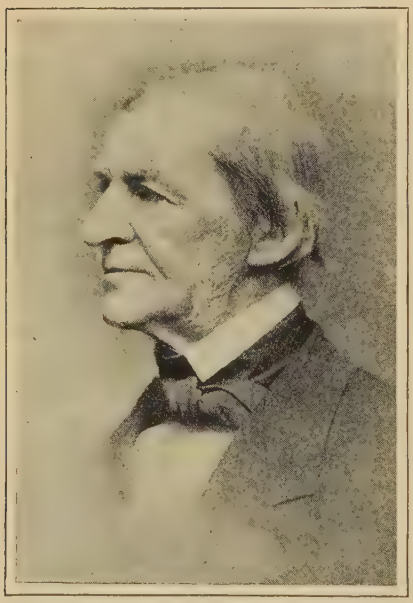
Mrs. Bixby, Boston, Massachusetts.

Dear Madam: I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,
Abraham Lincoln."

Historians. Among the historians of the period are at least four who deserve mention. George Bancroft's "History of the United States" is a conscientious piece of work, but is colored by a too constant glorification of all things American. The special field of

William H. Prescott was Spain, and his volumes on "Ferdinand and Isabella," "The Conquest of Mexico," and "The Conquest of Peru" are marked by sound scholarship and fine narrative style. John Lothrop Motley's "Rise of the Dutch Republic" and "History of the United Netherlands" are a thoroughly reliable treatment of the subject, and present in a vivid fashion the great personalities involved in it. Francis Parkman, laboring (as did also Prescott) under serious disadvantages of impaired sight and health, produced a fascinating series of volumes chiefly on the contest between France and England for supremacy in America. He is by far our best interpreter of the Indian nature. His "Conspiracy of Pontiac" has the ring of soundness and reality which one finds but rarely in Cooper. His sympathetic and scholarly treatment of the French missionaries, explorers, and statesmen, in "The Jesuits in North America," "La Salle and the Discovery of the New West," and "Count Frontenac and New France," have made for him a well-merited reputation as a sound historian.



RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Emerson. We come now to the great New England writers, humorously referred to by Holmes as the Brahmins of our literature. Almost all of them lived in Boston or its near vicinity. The Concord group included Emerson, Thoreau, and for a few years Hawthorne. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) was born in Boston and made his home there during the first thirty years of his life. He was a Harvard man and after graduation entered

the ministry, serving four years as pastor of the Old North Church in Boston. But even the liberal Unitarian faith proved too narrow for his spirit, and he resigned in 1832. The rest of his life was spent quietly in Concord, as a writer and honored citizen, and was varied only by lecture trips and by three voyages to Europe, the most important fruit of which was his lifelong friendship with Carlyle.

Matthew Arnold has very happily characterized Emerson as "the friend and aider of those who would live in the spirit." Emerson was the center of the Transcendentalist fellowship, a group of intellectuals who emphasized an idealistic view of life, a faith in the higher intuitions, and a devotion to the things which are not seen but are eternal. Emerson's poetry is almost all in the form of short lyrics which concern themselves with something higher and deeper than mere sensuous beauty or the emotions of impassioned youth. His poems are thoughtful in substance and somewhat rarefied, even austere, in expression. They have a crispness and decision of phrase and a compactness of statement that make them sometimes difficult reading, but they afford an excellent medium for his thought. A specimen taken almost at random will fairly illustrate his poetic style. Here is his lyric entitled "Experience":

"The lords of life, the lords of life,—
I saw them pass,
In their own guise,
Like and unlike,
Portly and grim,—
Use and Surprise,
Surface and Dream,
Succession swift, and spectral Wrong,
Temperament without a tongue,
And the inventor of the game
Omnipresent without name;—
Some to see, some to be guessed,
They march from east to west:
Little man, least of all,
Among the legs of his guardians tall,

Walks about with puzzled look.
Him by the hand dear Nature took,
Dearest Nature, strong and kind,
Whispered, "Darling, never mind!
Tomorrow they will wear another face,
The founder thou; these are thy race!"

The reader should familiarize himself with such representative poems of Emerson as "Each and All," "The Rhodora," "Days," "The Problem," "Mithridates," "Merlin," and the poignant "Threnody" on the death of his little boy.

Emerson's essays voice in general the same ideas as his poems. So far as form is concerned, they are somewhat loosely constructed, with too little regard for coherence and logical arrangement. Emerson is oracular. He does not argue. He is not troubled about minor inconsistencies. He speaks as the inspired prophet and not as the pleader of any special cause. The two ideas which stand out most conspicuously in his writings are his opposition to a materialistic view of life and his insistence upon the supreme worth of the individual personality. He urges us to beware of the deadening influence of convention and custom. "Trust thyself—every heart vibrates to that iron string," says he in his inspiring essay on "Self Reliance." And in "The American Scholar" we find such stirring and heartening sentences as the following:

"Every day, the sun; and after sunset, Night and her stars. Ever the winds blow; ever the grass grows. Every day, men and women, conversing, beholding and beholden. The scholar is he of all men whom this spectacle most engages. . . . Our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands, draws to a close. The millions that around us are rushing into life cannot always be fed on the sere remains of foreign harvests. Events, actions arise, that must be sung, that will sing themselves."

It is almost impossible to overrate the importance and the extent of Emerson's thoroughly wholesome influence upon American thought and, in the long run, upon American conduct as well. He was particularly happy in knowing that earnest young people

everywhere were responding to his appeal, although among persons of maturer years also he numbered thousands of sincere admirers. Every American should be familiar with the essays mentioned, and also with at least those on "Nature," "Compensation," "The Poet," "History," "The Oversoul," "Friendship," and "The Emancipation Address."

Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) was an intimate friend of Emerson, and his writings closely resemble those of his great contemporary in both content and style, although in the case of Thoreau nature occupies a leading place. He was born in Concord and spent virtually the whole of his life there, with the exception of short trips up the Merrimack River, to Cape Cod, and to the Maine woods and the St. Lawrence. "I love a wide margin to my life," he said; and he lived accordingly. He worked at the making of lead pencils and at surveying, in which he was an expert—earning enough in about six weeks to meet his modest expenses for an entire year. The real business of life he conceived to be an exploration of the world of thought and the higher realities. He was an exponent of the simple life and embodied his theory in a two years' residence on the shore of Walden Pond, near Concord, in a one-room cabin which he had built himself. Thoreau stands for three great ideas: the high value of a loving contact with nature; the necessity of getting away from the blighting influence of property and from the materialistic idea of life in general; and the development of one's individual personality. "A man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone," he says. "Live free and uncommitted; it makes little difference whether you are committed to a farm or to the county jail." Face the essentials of life and do not worry about its accidents. "If my jacket and trousers, my hat and shoes, are fit to worship God in, they will do, will they not?" Thoreau, like Emerson, is full of pregnant sentences like these. They constitute one of the delightful elements in his writings. Thoreau's poems are few in number, consisting mainly of reflective and descriptive lyrics in much the same form as those of Emerson, the one entitled "Smoke" being the most distinctive. The bulk of his work is in the form of essays and is embodied chiefly in four volumes:

"A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers," "Walden," "Cape Cod," and "In the Maine Woods." In all of these are revealed Thoreau's marvelously intimate knowledge of nature and his reflections on life and conduct. He was not an unsocial being, as many have supposed. He emphasized only the need of getting away from society for at least part of one's time and into the fellowship of trees, birds, snow, and stars. His writings are the voice of one crying in the wilderness of our materialistic and artificial life.

Hawthorne. Our greatest novelist was, on the whole, Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804–1864). He was born in the historic old town of Salem, Massachusetts, and like Longfellow was educated at Bowdoin College. Except for two periods of service as customs officer, and two as United States consul at Liverpool and at Rome, his whole life was given to literature. He lived for a year at Brook Farm, near Boston, a coöperative experiment of the Transcendentalist reformers, who attempted to combine culture with labor. He lived in Concord from 1842 to 1846, in the Old Manse, and again in 1852 and 1853. His friendship with Emerson and Thoreau was cordial but not intimate.

Hawthorne wrote several volumes of short stories, the most important being "Mosses from an Old Manse," "Twice-Told Tales," "The Snow Image," and "A Wonder-Book for Boys and Girls." In the short story Hawthorne leans to legend and tradition, more especially the darker side, and to fanciful and often sinister complications of personality. Typical tales are "The Birthmark," "Feathertop," "Young Goodman Brown," "The Maypole of Merrymount," "Rappaccini's Daughter," and "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment." Occasionally he yields to a brighter and more serene mood, as in "The Great Stone Face," and even to the playful, as in "A Rill from the Town Pump." His short stories are finely conceived and very carefully finished.

His novels reveal much the same tendency as his short stories. Hawthorne seemed fascinated by the strange and baffling problem of evil. His romances have at their heart some great sin or crime, in the consequences or relations of which his characters are involved.

A terrible sin concealed is the motive of "The Scarlet Letter." It is the story of the betrayal of Hester Prynne by the young minister Arthur Dimmesdale; of the punishment meted out to her by the severity of the Puritan code—to wear the scarlet letter A as a symbol of her sin; of her emergence, with her little daughter Pearl, through seven years of kindly and helpful ministration to the unfortunate, into a strength and beauty of character that touches the hearts of even her stern Puritan neighbors; of the gradual intensifying of remorse and of the burden of guilt concealed in the heart of the minister, who has all these years been achieving a constantly growing reputation for godliness among his congregation; and of his final collapse and death under the weight of his burden, but not before a full confession in the presence of all the people—a confession made tragically impressive by the fearful revelation of the scarlet letter upon his breast beneath his garments.

In Hawthorne's other novels we find the same insistence upon the problem of evil in the human heart. An ancient wrong casts its spell upon the characters in "The House of the Seven Gables"; a crime forces Donatello into manhood in "The Marble Faun"; and the tragic conflict between selfish passion and devotion to social reform brings about the wreck of a man's soul in "The Blithedale Romance." Hawthorne was a Unitarian, but he never disburdened himself of the Puritan shadow of sin and its awful hold upon the human race.

Hawthorne wrote with extreme and scrupulous care. Like Irving he is of the "old school,"—almost the last of note in our literature,—and his sentences have the ease, grace, and elevated diction of the best prose of an earlier day.

Whittier. The so-called Cambridge group of authors includes Longfellow, Lowell, and Holmes. John Greenleaf Whittier, though not immediately connected with Boston and Cambridge, lived within forty miles of these places and was sufficiently intimate with the writers just mentioned to warrant our speaking of him in the same connection. Unlike them, however, he had none of the advantages of college training, foreign travel, or cultured environment. He was born in 1807 on a farm in Haverhill, Massachusetts, and was a genuine product of the soil. In spite of his severely limited schooling he entered the field of journalism and made his way little by

little in the newspaper world. Becoming early identified with the antislavery movement, he devoted himself to it with a greater intensity of enthusiasm than any other of our notable writers. He was actively interested in local politics, especially upon the antislavery issue, and served a term as member of the Massachusetts legislature. From 1840 to the end of his life in 1892 he lived in Amesbury, not far from the old home at Haverhill.

Whittier's poems on slavery include his early volume "Voices of Freedom," the famous but rather inferior "Barbara Frietchie," "Ichabod" (on Webster's supposed surrender to the Southern cause), "The Lost Occasion" (a somewhat milder judgment on the same theme), and the finely poetic "Laus Deo," written at the close of the war. Whittier also treated New England legends and traditions with an effective hand, his best attempt in this field being "Skipper Ireson's Ride." But his great contribution to our literature lies in his vivid and deeply truthful portrayals of rural New England life. "Snowbound" is unsurpassed as a picture of humble farm life and character, done with a loving hand and a kindly heart. The more sordid and barren aspects of that life appear in the prologue to "Among the Hills." Other notable poems in the same field are "Maud Muller," "In School Days," "The Barefoot Boy," and the exquisite—indeed almost perfect—lyric "Telling the Bees." The profoundly religious Quaker faith of Whittier, a faith in which the quarrels of the "jarring sects" find no place and in which love is deep and strong, finds a beautiful expression in "The Eternal Goodness" and in some of Whittier's hymns, especially the one containing the stanza beginning :

"We may not climb the heavenly steeps
To bring the Lord Christ down."

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, the best beloved of American poets, was born at Portland, Maine, in 1807. Except for the tragic loss of his wife, who was burned to death in his presence, his life was an uneventful one. He made several voyages to Europe, partly to qualify himself for the professorship of modern languages at Bowdoin and later at Harvard, where he served for eighteen years.

Most of his life was passed at Cambridge, the last twenty-five years or so in studious retirement, varied by one or two trips abroad. He died in 1882.

The popularity of Longfellow rests upon his extreme simplicity, upon the obviousness of his sentiments, upon his choice of familiar themes, and upon his tendency to moralize. These qualities stand out in such well-known poems as "The Psalm of Life," "The Children's Hour," "The Rainy Day," "The Village Blacksmith," and scores of others. Indeed there is hardly one of his poems in which the Puritan legacy of pointing a moral is not apparent. In spite of this fault, or perhaps we might better say because of it, he succeeded admirably in putting into graceful poetic form the common experiences and moods of life and so rendered a very wide if not deep service to our people. Another great service which he performed was that of familiarizing the American public to some extent with the varied and abundant culture of the Old World. Many of his poetic tales, ballads, and lyrics were of definite value in this field; for example, "The Belfry of Bruges," "The Saga of King Olaf," "Giotto's Tower," and "King Robert of Sicily." In the field of early American history also he performed much the same service —in such poems as "Evangeline" and "The Courtship of Miles Standish" (the best examples of the Homeric hexameter in English), "Lady Wentworth," "Ballad of the French Fleet," and other poems. The American Indian, too, Longfellow popularized in "Hiawatha." It has been somewhat the custom to disparage this poem as thin and immature and suited to children only, but this is a mistaken judgment. It is true that Longfellow drew his material from secondary sources. It is true also that he idealizes and moralizes with too free a hand. But the primitive cadence of the verse (based on the Finnish epic "Kalevala") and the symbolic value of many of the nature stories justify us in calling "Hiawatha" an American epic of relatively high merit. Another real service rendered by Longfellow is found in his excellent translations from many of the European languages, especially that of Dante's "Divine Comedy." His more mature work, including "The Tales of a Wayside Inn," "Christus," "Ultima Thule," and "Michael

Angelo," gives expression to a deeper and less obvious and hence more satisfying view of life than his earlier poems.

Longfellow's style is easy, smooth, not strong but quiet and gently flowing, and shows a thorough command of rime and the conventional requirements of stanza structure. He cannot be called a great poet, but, like Irving, he may be said to have reached a very wide circle of responsive readers and to have rescued much of our common experience from its triviality by giving it a poetic coloring and form.

James Russell Lowell was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1819. He graduated from Harvard, after some difference of opinion between himself and the faculty which resulted in his suspension during part of his senior year. During the greater part of his life he lived in Cambridge, and died there in 1891. Lowell was a man of great vigor of intellect and of widely varied activities. He was a scholar, poet, critic, editor, and diplomat. His editorship included that of the *Atlantic Monthly* and of the *North American Review*. He succeeded Longfellow as professor of modern languages at Harvard, where he served for twenty-one years. As minister to Spain and to Great Britain he performed the functions of the post, both diplomatic and social, in a superlatively competent way. As a literary critic he is independent if not original, and his critical work is marked by sound scholarship, keen insight, and strong and concrete style. The volumes entitled "Among my Books," "My Study Windows," and "The Old English Dramatists" contain some of the best literary criticism produced in the United States up to his time.

Lowell's critical tendency overflows into his poetry to the extent at least of one remarkable poem, "A Fable for Critics," in which in a vigorous, rattling meter he characterizes nearly all his contemporaries and himself as well. His tone is humorous throughout, but his judgment is remarkably fair and accurate. "The Vision of Sir Launfal" is his own interpretation of the Grail story in modern terms:

> "The holy supper is kept indeed
> In whatso we share with another's need."

The poem contains a lofty spiritual idea and also some excellent nature descriptions, including the famous passage beginning

"And what is so rare as a day in June?"

Lowell was a fearless opponent of slavery, his best work on this subject being the two series of "Biglow Papers." They are written in Yankee dialect, of which Lowell was a thorough master. They are put forth as the poetic efforts of a country lad, Hosea Biglow. The first series is on the subject of our war with Mexico, which Lowell violently opposed as an attempt at the extension of the slave power. The second series was called forth by the Civil War. Beneath the humorous surface of these poems there is an undercurrent of very serious satire of great energy and deep conviction. Many of Lowell's intense utterances reflect the most enlightened sentiments of the present day. The most appealing of all these Yankee idyls is one that is not political, but purely human in its motive—"The Courtin'." The picture of the bashful Zekle is inimitable:

"He stood a spell on one foot fust,
Then stood a spell on t'other;
An' on which one he felt the wust
He couldn't ha' told ye nuther."

Among Lowell's other war poems are "The Present Crisis,"—a ringing appeal to the North to respond to the great cause,—and the lofty "Commemoration Ode," in honor of the Harvard men who had given their lives in the war. The latter contains the famous tribute to Lincoln which concludes with the line:

"New birth of our new soil, the first American."

Lowell's other poetry is abundant in amount and of great range. Typical poems are "The Shepherd of King Admetus," "An Indian Summer Reverie," "Under the Willows," and "The Cathedral." They are written with his characteristic vigor and fullness of utterance. Indeed Lowell's faults, such as they are, may be traced to his resistless flow of thought and the spontaneous vigor with which

he wrote—faults of careless construction, not always appropriate diction, diffuseness, and occasional want of logical structure. But his verse is always eager and fresh and generally on a high level of poetic excellence.

Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809–1894) was born in Cambridge, but except for his several European trips lived chiefly in Boston. Like Longfellow and Lowell he was of the old New England aristocracy. He graduated from Harvard in 1829, was a practicing physician in Boston, and was for nearly forty years professor of anatomy at Harvard. He was the perennial class poet at the annual alumni reunions of his college class. He began his poem on the thirtieth reunion thus:

> "Has there any old fellow got mixed with the boys?
> If there has, take him out, without making a noise."

This is quite in keeping with Holmes's customary mood. A very large part of his poetry is occasional in its subject matter—written for various gatherings, celebrations, commemorations, etc., and therefore not of great permanent value. Only some half dozen of his poems reveal the spirit that transcends the occasion and rises to real poetic merit. The best of these is the tenderly humorous and deeply sympathetic "Last Leaf"—a vivid portrait of the aged survivor of a day long past:

> "But now he walks the streets,
> And he looks at all he meets,
> Sad and wan;
> And he shakes his feeble head,
> That it seems as if he said,
> 'They are gone.'"

The famous "Chambered Nautilus" conveys in an impressive way a deep spiritual lesson. So also do several of Holmes's hymns. A particular favorite is the one beginning:

> "Lord of all being, throned afar,
> Thy glory flames from sun and star."

In his more characteristically humorous tone are "Dorothy Q" and "The Wonderful One-Hoss Shay," the latter finely typical of Yankee shrewdness and "logic."

Holmes's remarkable prose series of "Breakfast Table" essays, contributed to the *Atlantic Monthly*, are the best revelation of his genial humor and friendly seriousness. The several volumes are entitled "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," "The Poet at the Breakfast Table," "The Professor at the Breakfast Table," and "Over the Teacups." The author conceives himself as the center of a boarding-house group, discoursing in a garrulous strain of humor, with an undercurrent of serious thought and in a wholly random fashion, upon whatever happens to suggest itself to him. His talk is interspersed with short poems and with remarks by the landlady's daughter, the schoolmistress, the divinity student, "the young man named John," and "the old gentleman who sits opposite." As a novelist Holmes did some creditable but not very important work in "Elsie Venner," "A Mortal Antipathy," and "The Guardian Angel."

Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811–1896) may well be included in the Boston group, as she came of New England stock and lived for some years at Andover. Almost every reader of English is familiar with "Uncle Tom's Cabin." It was written as a propagandist novel in the antislavery cause and has the weaknesses attaching to all propagandist literature. It is not always true to fact and not always fair to Southern life, but it is a story of absorbing interest, and its immense popularity served quite as effectively as the addresses and sermons of her famous brother Henry Ward Beecher in securing adherents to the cause.

Walt Whitman. Leaving the New England group, we come now to one of the most significant figures in American literature—Walt Whitman. He was born in 1819 on Long Island ; had practically no formal schooling ; worked as printer, carpenter, editor, army-hospital attendant, and government clerk; rambled over a large part of the South, mostly on foot ; and passed the closing years of his life in the modest cottage in Camden, New Jersey, where he died in 1892.

The great bulk of Whitman's poetry is contained in the various successive editions of "Leaves of Grass," originally published in 1855. So far as subject matter is concerned, Whitman's great distinction lies in his uncompromising individualism on the one hand and the inspiring sweep of his idea of democracy on the other:

> "One's self I sing, a simple, separate person;
> Yet utter the word *democratic*, the word *en masse*."

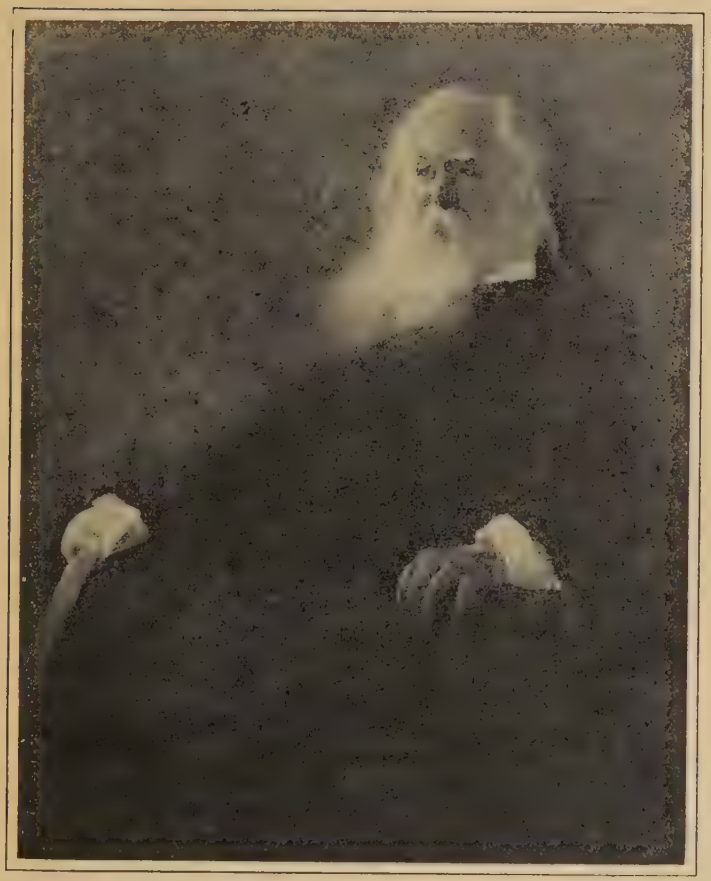
The New England poets believed in America and in democracy, but always with moments of anxious misgiving and always with one eye turned more or less deferentially to the Old World. Whitman looked westward, had no misgivings, and rejoiced in the great, unkempt, sweaty, unwashed mass of humanity that was America in the making:

> "Beautiful World of new, superber Birth, that rises to
> my eyes,
> Like a limitless golden cloud, filling the western sky."

Some of the best Civil War poems that our literature boasts are included in "Leaves of Grass"—such intense and graphic and richly poetic pieces as "Eighteen Sixty-One," "Come Up from the Fields, Father," "A March in the Ranks Hard Prest," "The Wound-Dresser," and the solemnly tender "Reconciliation," so brief and simple, and yet so deeply satisfying:

> "Word over all, beautiful as the sky,
> Beautiful that war and all its deeds of carnage must in time be utterly lost,
> That the hands of the sisters Death and Night incessantly softly wash again, and ever again, this soil'd world;
> For my enemy is dead, a man divine as myself is dead;
> I look where he lies white-faced and still in the coffin—I draw near,
> Bend down and touch lightly with my lips the white face in the coffin."

"O Captain, my Captain," on the theme of the death of Lincoln, is the most popular of Whitman's poems. As poetry, however, it is inferior to "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," which, in



WALT WHITMAN

depth and greatness of feeling and in simple poetic power, is the finest tribute to Lincoln in our literature. The closing lines are as follows:

"Comrades mine and I in the midst, and their memory ever to keep, for the dead I loved so well,
For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands—and this for his dear sake,
Lilac and star and bird twined with the chant of my soul,
There in the fragrant pines and the cedars dusk and dim."

The individual note in Whitman is constantly expressed in terms of universal friendship, comradeship, and good will. He says:

"I dream'd in a dream, I saw a city invincible to the attacks of the whole of the rest of the earth;
I dream'd that was the City of Friends;
Nothing was greater there than the quality of robust love—it led the rest;
It was seen every hour in the actions of the men of that city,
And in all their looks and words."

Whitman's splendid and unabashed confidence in the daring adventure of the individual soul into the world of human experience is finely expressed in the following lines from "Passage to India":

> "Sail forth! Steer for the deep waters only!
> Reckless, O soul, exploring, I with thee, and thou with me;
> For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go,
> And we will risk the ship, ourselves, and all."

As to form, Whitman inaugurated a new technique of poetry—what is now known as "free verse." The form was not widely adopted, however, until the rise of what has been called the "new poetry" movement in our own times. Free verse means simply the rejection of rime (except incidentally) and also of strict metrical structure, the rhythm of the line being irregular and based rather upon cadence than upon the regular limitation of syllables. The extracts quoted from his poems will give the reader a good idea of free-verse form as employed by Whitman.

It is easy to criticize Whitman. He who will may speak with some truth of his crudity, his frequent lack of artistic sense, the peculiarities of his vocabulary, his lapses into quite ordinary prose, his startling glorification of the animal appetites. Yet how much on the positive side remains to be said! Let the reader take Whitman's volume in hand and turn the pages with sympathy and a desire to understand, as is Whitman's due. What does he discover? A great, virile, large-hearted man, with an almost unparalleled sense of comradeship and good will. He makes no claim to excellence, as he says, "in verbal melody and all the conventional technique of poetry." His plea is that "the profoundest service that poems or any other writings can do for their reader is to fill him with vigorous and clean manliness, religiousness, and give him *good heart* as a radical possession and habit." He states it as his conviction that "the crowning growth of the United States is to be spiritual and heroic. To help start and favor that growth—or even to call attention to it, or the need of it—is the beginning, middle, and final purpose of the poems" (that is, of "Leaves of Grass"). Whitman's best work ranks with the best that has been done in American literature; and he may well be regarded as voicing the spirit of the modern world, facing forward, rejecting traditional forms, and accepting the whole of life as the domain of art.

The Nineteenth Century (1870–1900)

The third generation of our national life saw a rapid recovery from the effects of a devastating war, and a revival of the impulse to expansion that had characterized the pre-war period. Pioneer conditions in the West and Pacific Northwest gave way to settled agricultural and industrial life. Our acquisition of the Hawaiian and Philippine Islands brought us into contact with world problems and policies. Business enterprise, engineering science, and the development of our natural resources combined to make us a very wealthy and very prosperous people, as these terms are commonly understood. Most significant of all was the definite emergence of the inherent conflict between capital and labor, revealing itself in

the organization of vast business corporations on the one hand and widely federated labor unions on the other. Under these conditions our literature became broadly dispersed. Boston was no longer the hub of the literary universe. The short story was rapidly developed as a literary diet for a very much occupied people. The period has relatively few great names to its credit, but a multitude of lesser writers whose work is a graphic picture of the hopeful as well as the sinister aspects of the times.

The East continued for some years to hold its place as the principal field of literary production, but its great prestige was gone. Thomas Bailey Aldrich produced narrative and lyric poetry in considerable quantity and often of real poetic effectiveness. The banker-poet Edmund Clarence Stedman wrote a number of spirited lyrics, among the best being his "Pan in Wall Street," and produced some valuable work in literary criticism, notably his "Victorian Poets." The exquisite little poetic fancies of Emily Dickinson—whimsical, sensitive, and fleeting in quality—have a distinctive charm; as, for example, the following delicate little poem entitled "Autumn":

"The morns are meeker than they were,
The nuts are getting brown;
The berry's cheek is plumper,
The rose is out of town.

"The maple wears a gayer scarf,
The field a scarlet gown.
Lest I should be old-fashioned,
I'll put a trinket on."[1]

Somewhat similar, but without the elflike grace of Miss Dickinson's poems, are the brief, thoughtful, artistically finished lyrics of Richard Watson Gilder.

Among the novelists one of the most significant names is that of **William Dean Howells** (1837–1920). Though born in Ohio, he passed most of his life in Boston and New York, where he served respectively as editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* and associate editor of *Harper's Magazine*. He is remarkable for two things: he is the

[1] Copyright by Little, Brown and Company.

greatest of our later novelists, representing the emphasis upon fiction, and more particularly Realistic fiction, that characterized his period; and he is among the first of our notable writers to concentrate his thought in an unobtrusive but insistent way upon the theme of social justice. His earlier novels, for example "The Rise of Silas Lapham" and "A Modern Instance," are remarkable for their careful technique and for their prevailing choice of the "pale gray" types of common, unromantic experience as his favorite material. His "conversion," or awakening, came with the profound influence exerted upon him by the works of Tolstoy and his consequent realization of the essential tragedy inherent in our social and economic maladjustments.[1] This later experience is presented with a finely developed artistic skill and with a delicate undertone of irony in such novels as "A Hazard of New Fortunes," "The Quality of Mercy," "The Kentons," and "The Leatherwood God" (to mention only a few of his more important novels), and in the fictitious bit of socialist propaganda "A Traveler from Altruria." Howells was never sensational, wrote no "thrillers" or "best sellers," and had a quality of reserve and understatement which attracts the thoughtful reader rather than a wider public.

WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS

Henry James (1843–1916) resided during the greater part of his life in Europe, chiefly in England, and in the year before his death became a British subject. His early environment was one of cul-

[1] See page 313.

ture and of leisure, and his inherent nature made him a keen observer of character with a view to its utilization in fiction. He has produced a remarkable series of so-called "international novels"—studies chiefly of the American in a European environment. In his earlier novels—such, for example, as "Roderick Hudson," "The American," and "The Portrait of a Lady"—he employs a relatively large canvas, fullness of incident, and broadness of theme. In his later work—"The Ambassadors," "The Awkward Age," "The Golden Bowl," and "The Wings of a Dove"—we find a much greater limitation of field, a closeness of texture, a studied minuteness of detail, and an exactness of psychological observation that place him in the company of George Eliot, Flaubert, and Turgenev. James's method led him to the adoption of an extremely complex sentence form,—overelaborate, urbane, fastidious, and scrupulously unemphatic,—the exasperation of the uncritical reader and the delight of an inner circle of devoted admirers. His short stories, which have a deservedly high reputation, deal with much the same subject matter and motives as his novels, but with somewhat less of psychological and stylistic subtlety. "Daisy Miller" is a good example of the "long short-story," or novelette, in which James was particularly successful.

Among the essayists and miscellaneous prose writers of the period Charles Dudley Warner and George William Curtis deserve special mention. Two notable writers on nature were John Burroughs and John Muir. Charles Eliot Norton, in his literary criticism and in his admirable prose translation of Dante, shows fine scholarship and high literary ability. Among the exponents of the "new history" movement—a movement which emphasizes scrupulous accuracy, severe impartiality, and logical judgment—a conspicuous place is occupied by **John Fiske** (1842–1901). His earlier work was in the field of evolutionary philosophy, his most important volumes being "Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy," "The Idea of God," and "The Origin of Evil." His volume on "American Political Ideals," published in 1885, proved to be the turning-point from which is dated his later work in American history. His historical studies extend from the discoverers of America to the inauguration

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of the Federal government, the most important titles being "Old Virginia and her Neighbors," "The American Revolution," and "The Critical Period in American History." Fiske has been praised as a pioneer in the application of the evolutionary idea to history, but this aspect of his work has been somewhat overrated. He is, however, perhaps the chief of American historians in narrative and dramatic appeal. Excellent work in the field of American history has also been done in recent years by John Bach McMaster, James Ford Rhodes, and Frederick J. Turner.

SIDNEY LANIER

The West. In the period under discussion the West begins definitely to come into its own. The finely humorous and pathetic poems of James Whitcomb Riley are among our best interpretations of Indiana life. Eugene Field has written some exquisite child poems, and other poetry and short stories of merit. The Far West is represented by Joaquin Miller and Edgar Rowland Sill, both of whom have produced excellent lyric and narrative poems.

Among the novelists of the West, Samuel L. Clemens (1835–1910), writing under the assumed name of "**Mark Twain**," has a place peculiarly his own. He came into prominence through his amusing little sketch "The Jumping Frog," and followed it up with two inimitable stories of boyhood life,—"Tom Sawyer" and "Huckleberry Finn,"—among the earliest and best portrayals of the American boy as he really is. His travel books, especially "Innocents Abroad," are full of ironical references to the assumed

superiority of European culture. In fact, Mark Twain rose but rarely to the height of a truly cultured vision of life, and his humor, while rich and abundant, is often lacking in the finer and more delicate qualities. Underlying his sportive vein there is, however, a deeply serious, even pessimistic, tone, that represents him perhaps more truly than does his humor. Among his best-known serious volumes is his sympathetic study "Joan of Arc."

The South maintained in this period, as it has always done, a high standard of literary excellence, though the individual names are relatively few. The greatest name, on the whole, is that of **Sidney Lanier** (1842–1881), poet, Confederate soldier, teacher, musician—a highly gifted and sensitive personality. His poems have a finished excellence of form and a broad and deep imaginative value; and their richly musical quality bears witness to the intimate relation which Lanier maintained should always exist between music and poetry. His best-known poem is "The Marshes of Glynn"—a fine combination of the sensuous beauty of nature on the one hand and depth of spiritual apprehension on the other:

> "Oh, like to the greatness of God is the greatness within
> The range of the marshes, the liberal marshes of Glynn."

The novelists of the South have contributed in no small measure to the wealth of our literature. George W. Cable, in "Bonaventure," "Old Creole Days," and other volumes, has given us our best interpretation of Acadian and Creole life in Louisiana. Thomas Nelson Page has done a similar service for the Virginia negro, and Joel Chandler Harris for the Georgia negro, especially in his "Uncle Remus" series of folk tales.

The Twentieth Century

It is almost impossible for a contemporary to grasp the trend and spirit of his own times. We are too much a part of the current to realize its direction. One, at least, of the significant aspects of the life of our day would seem to be the intensifying of the industrial struggle between masters and men, a struggle that is apparent on

almost every hand and in almost every manifestation of our life. Another is, of course, the experience of the World War and the troubled conditions following in its wake. The quantity of literature inspired by these two themes has been immense, especially that inspired by the war. Undoubtedly the bulk of it will live only for the passing hour. But it is not easy to say who among the vast host of present-day writers are likely to prove immortals.

RICHARD HOVEY

Among the poets, we may probably venture to assign a relatively high place to William Vaughn Moody (1869–1910), a poet and dramatist of deep seriousness, wide culture, and extraordinary lyric power. Though he is hopeful for the future of America, he is far removed from the shallow optimism of too many of our recent writers. The work of George Edward Woodberry and Richard Hovey gives a finely poetic expression to many of the aspects of the time and the moods of the human soul.

In the second decade of the century the so-called "new poetry" movement has occupied a large place in American as well as in European literature. So far as form is concerned, the new movement is impatient of traditional stanzaic and metrical structure as imposing an unnecessary limitation on the poet's impulse. In this respect it goes back to Whitman, choosing largely the medium of free verse which he employed in so masterly a way. His earliest disciples and imitators, however, were among the poets of France.

It must not be assumed that the new poetry is confined to free verse. The traditional forms, such as the sonnet, quatrain, and blank verse, are not excluded so long as they really provide a suitable vehicle of expression. The movement has tried also to rid itself of formal "poetic diction"—such terms as "thee" and "thou," "morn," "o'er," "ne'er," "mine eyes," and the like—and to convey its thought in natural, plain, and unadorned language. With respect to subject matter, the new poets have striven to free themselves from the didactic and obviously moral tone, although their work often conveys a deep and serious meaning. They feel that all the phenomena of life are legitimate material for poetry—blast furnaces and ghetto fruit-venders as well as mountains, meadows, and lofty deeds. Unfortunately the movement has its camp following of inferior verse-writers who seek distinction in mere freakishness and eccentricity. But these should not mislead one into a harsh judgment of the school as a whole, which has merits of a high and real order. Among its conspicuous exponents are Edward Arlington Robinson, Edgar Lee Masters, Robert Frost, Carl Sandburg, Vachel Lindsay, and Witter Bynner. The Imagist group, whose ambition is to present clear, hard, concentrated, and strictly objective pictures of nature and life, is best represented by Amy Lowell, John Gould Fletcher, and Mrs. Richard Aldington, the last-named writing under the pen name of "H. D."

O. HENRY

Of the host of recent and contemporary novelists we single out for mention Hamlin Garland, whose novels and short stories of farm life in the Middle West are convincing and well written; William Sydney Porter (writing under the name of "O. Henry"), who is, on the whole, the best of our recent short-story writers; Winston Churchill, who has written worth-while novels on historical and social themes; Edith Wharton, who has produced some excellent studies, especially of New York society life; Jack London, who concerns himself chiefly with the raw and primitive and elemental aspects of life; Theodore Dreiser, probably the most frank and uncompromising of our Realistic novelists; and James Branch Cabell, whose unique style and original inventiveness have proved attractive to many readers. Aspects of the industrial struggle are presented by Margaret Deland, Frank Norris, and Ernest Poole.

American playwrights of the present and the recent past have produced a notable quantity of work—not much of it great, but a good deal of it of more than average excellence. Among the conspicuous names are those of Bronson Howard, Clyde Fitch, Augustus Thomas, Edward Sheldon, Percy Mackaye, Charles Rann Kennedy, George Middleton, and Eugene O'Neill.

In the field of prose other than fiction and drama the product has been so abundant as to make selection almost impossible. Our writers have produced distinguished work in history, essays, literary criticism, and political and social exposition. William James, in his remarkably clear and stimulating studies in psychology, has been of very definite value to a host of readers. In philosophy notable work has been done by Josiah Royce and John Dewey. Henry Adams, in his thoughtful autobiographical volume entitled "The Education of Henry Adams," offers a searching analysis and criticism of many of the aspects of present-day American life. Theodore Roosevelt's historical writings show an easy command of his material and a vigorous and lucid narrative style. Woodrow Wilson's numerous works on history and economics deserve high praise, and his State papers and addresses during the term of his presidency constitute a clear statement in superior literary style of the high objects for which we entered the World War.

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Southern life in colonial times.
New England life in colonial times.
Franklin's philosophy of life.
A group of Irving's short stories.
Cooper's Indians.
The Lincoln-Douglas debates.
A review of Parkman's "La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West."
Emerson's "Self-Reliance."
Thoreau's philosophy of life.
Hawthorne and the problem of evil.
New England farm life as presented by Whittier.
Longfellow as a cultural influence.
Whitman's idea of democracy.
Howells as a Realist.
A study of Henry James's "Portrait of a Lady."
An estimate of Mark Twain.
The "new poetry" movement.
The best recent American plays.
A study of a novel of the day.

A CLOSING WORD

We have now completed our journey—from Egypt and Babylonia, the oldest of nations, to America, almost the newest. The reader will recall that in the preface to this volume the statement was made that the province of our study was to be the literature of the major nations. Much of interest and significance in the literature of the world has perforce been passed by. Very attractive material in Spanish-American literature is now rapidly becoming known to readers of English. A good deal of excellent writing has been done, and is being done, in Canada and other portions of the British Empire not covered in our sketch. The Magyar literature of Hungary is very considerable in amount, covers many fields, and includes the novels of Maurus Jókai, whose "Black Diamonds," for example, has won a host of readers in its English translation. In Poland many writers of distinction have appeared through the centuries. None of these is better known to English readers than an author of our own day, Henryk Sienkiewicz. In 1905 he was awarded the Nobel prize for literature. His "Quo Vadis?" is a great novel. The literature of the Czechs will perhaps be made accessible to us in view of the widespread interest in the new nation of Czechoslovakia. A number of rather remarkable Balkan tales have recently been published in English. The Rumanian folk songs, collected from the peasants by Hélène Vacaresco and translated by Carmen Sylva and Alma Strettell under the title "The Bard of the Dimbovitza," consist of poetry of a beautiful and poignant quality. Vondel, Maartens, and other Dutch writers have achieved distinction. If our space permitted, our tale might be lengthened indefinitely, linking the past with the present and embracing the sincere and human utterances of people of all races.

"Except a living man," said Charles Kingsley, "there is nothing more wonderful than a book!—a message from human souls whom we never saw, who lived perhaps thousands of miles away. . . . They speak to us, amuse us, inspire us, teach us, open their hearts to us as brothers."

INDEX

KEY TO PRONUNCIATION: fāte, făt, ärm, åsk, câre; ēve, mĕt, makēr; īce, ĭt; ōld, nŏt, hôrse, fōōd, foŏt; ūse, ŭp. ü *represents the German and French sound as in* grün *and* lune (= lün). û *represents the German* ö, oe (schön), *and French* eu (jeu = zhû). *Unmarked vowels are obscure.* th, *as in* then. ṅ *represents the French nasalizing* n, *as in French* ton. K *represents the German* ch, *as in* ach.

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